A KEY TO LORD TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

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Arthur H. Hallam.

From a bust by Chantrey.

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LORD TENNYSON'S

"IN MEMORIAM"

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AND
SUB-DEAN OF YORK

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Dedication.

TO THE CHERISHED MEMORY OF THE MOTHER OF MY CHILDREN, I DEDICATE THIS BRIEF LABOUR OF LOVE.—A. G.

PREFACE.

When any one has survived the allotted age of man, there is a long past to remember, and a short future to expect; and it is the period of youth which is then found most clearly recorded on the tablets of the brain—the days, probably, of school and college, and the first establishment of a self-made home.

Middle life, with its work and anxieties, is by comparison only feebly retained; as though there had been found no room for fuller records on the preoccupied mind. But, in the indistinct interval of forty or fifty years, the loss by death of those whom we have loved cannot be forgotten; and when one dearer than any friend is also taken

away, then, under such bereavement, may be found an amount of comfort and support in the Poet Laureate's *In Memoriam* which no other secular writing can supply.

To me, this Poem has been an additional buttress to the faith, which my education and sacred profession had sustained.

When a great mind, at once so speculative and so untrammelled, runs over the whole field of thought, and comes to the conviction that the hope of the Christian is the one sure prospect beyond the grave; this imparts to the mourner a consolation, to which nothing earthly can compare.

My own interest in this great Poem has been farther enhanced by the fact that I and mine, long years ago, enjoyed friendly intercourse with the Poet at Freshwater; and this was afterwards renewed in the lives of his younger son and mine.

The incidents of the Poem have also slightly touched me, inasmuch as I was a contemporary of Arthur H. Hallam, at

Eton; and I was in Chapman's house, at Charterhouse, with Edmund Law Lushington, when he was, at a very early age, captain of the school. The associates of Hallam's schooldays I well recall, for they included several who became eminent in the service of the state, and in the ranks of literature; and most of these have now passed away. *In Memoriam* has thus, in a measure, been the means of recalling my own early youth; and I have felt that the subject of the Poem befitted the study of my advanced life.

The scenery of *In Memoriam* being principally laid either at Somersby or Clevedon—the birth-place of the Poet or the burial-place of his friend—I had long been desirous of visiting these somewhat retired spots; and my wish has at length been gratified.

After sleeping at Horncastle, we drove six miles across a flat uninteresting country, where the fields betrayed signs of agricul-

tural depression, until a short steep descent brought us into a more sheltered and wooded region, where was the sound of running water;[a] and the little old church, with its square stumpy moss-covered tower, told us that we were in the village of Somersby—

> "the well-beloved place
> Where first we gazed upon the sky."

And one could well fancy that the roomy comfortable residence, in which the Rev. Dr. Tennyson reared a large family, was a cherished home, and is still held in fond remembrance.

This house is not the Rectory, though for a long time it was so tenanted: it is rather the Manor House of the Burton family, who for centuries[b] have owned the land and been patrons of the living. The

[a] The brook alone far off was heard." P. xcv. s. 2.

[b] In Bag Enderby Church is a stone memorial tablet to the Burton family, let into the wall, and dated 1591. Upon it are carved, in bold relief, parents and children in a kneeling posture. It has a Latin motto, signifying, that all begins with the dust of the earth, and ends with it.

present possessor now occupies it, and he received our visit of interested enquiry with much courtesy and kindness.

The house stands a little back from the road, with a drive to the door which may be called the front entrance; though the principal rooms are behind, and look into the garden. Here are the

> "Witch-elms that counterchange the floor
> Of this flat lawn with dusk and bright;"

and the lawn may still be called *flat*, (see note, page 96), though it slopes slightly downward with the natural leaning of the ground. The four poplars have been blown down.

Beyond the lawn stretches the garden, and yet a little farther is a pond, on which, they say, the young inhabitants of the pseudo-Rectory learned to skate. The largest room in this Manor House was added by Dr. Tennyson: it is the dining-room, with an open groined roof; and the

walls of it are now covered with apparently old paintings—heirlooms, one may suppose, of the Burton family.

In the centre of the hamlet, where three roads meet, with a guide-post directing the wayfarer to Louth, Horncastle, and Alford, there stands a fine witch-elm ; and at Bag Enderby, also in the middle of the road, is another still larger witch-elm, with a huge arm that craves support. Both these trees were carried and planted, about a century ago, by the grandfather of Mr. Burton, the present proprietor of the estate.

Somersby and Bag Enderby are hamlets about one quarter of a mile apart, and are held by one Rector, who now resides at the latter place. Their ancient churches are structures of more strength than beauty; and though neither of them is larger than a good sized chamber, it quite suffices for the few inhabitants. At both churches we found the key in the door, and could therefore investigate the sacred buildings

at our leisure; and coming from a populous manufacturing district, with a grand mediæval parish church, we found the contrast very striking.

Somersby churchyard adjoins the road, but the ground is higher. The first object which greets you on entering through a short shaded path, is a most remarkable crucifix, which has fortunately escaped the hand of Puritan violence. On a thin stone shaft, which is at least twelve feet high, there is the carved figure of our Lord on the Cross, still plainly traceable; and behind is a full-length draped female figure. This antique gem is sheltered under a narrow-pointed roof of stone. It is a curious and rare memorial of ante-Reformation times; and within the porch there is a contemporary relic—a shallow stone basin for holy water—which still seems to invite the finger to dip, and mark the holy sign. Over the porch entrance is a plain dial with the motto, "Time passeth."

The interior of the church has lost something of the primitive character that still reigns at Enderby: there has been a partial restoration: both nave and chancel are now floored with coloured tiles, and the old pews have been superseded by open sittings of red pine. There is a plain solid font lined with lead; and having seen the chamber in which the great Poet was born, we could not help thinking that *here* was the birth-place of that name,[a] which not even his well-earned peerage will ever obliterate.

Over the porch door inside are the royal arms, and at the west end two bell ropes depend, which are the means of summoning the few worshippers to the Sunday service. In the *sacrarium* is a small brass, showing a kneeling figure and an armorial shield, dedicated to George Littlebury, 1612. A more modern marble

[a] The name is happily preserved in his patent of nobility, which runs thus: "Alfred, 1st Baron Tennyson of Aldworth, in the County of Sussex."

monument, to one of the Burtons, is fixed on the wall near the pulpit.

The exterior of the church shows strong coarse stone masonry, which is here and there repaired and patched by local art with bricks. In the small graveyard are two altar tombs, which drew our attention. They seem to cover a vault, and are railed round; and the inscription on one records that Dr. Tennyson held the livings of Somersby, Bag Enderby, Benniworth, and Great Grimsby, and that he died on 16th March, 1831, aged 52.[a] Wild violets were in flower encircling the base of this tomb. A successor was buried near, the Rev. L. B. Burton, who had held the two adjoining benefices for more than forty years.

Immediately opposite the church, and closely adjacent to the Manor House, is a very remarkable building, of considerable

[a] About the time of Dr. Tennyson's death, the population of Somersby was 61, the church accommodation 60, and the annual value of the benefice £92. The population of Bag Enderby was 115, church accommodation 100, and value £92.

architectural pretension; as will be credited when it is told that Sir J. Vanbrugh designed it! It is entirely composed of brick—sombre and solid in character—it has a flat roof and is battlemented. If differently placed, it might have suggested Mariana's "Moated Grange." It is an edifice of more exterior grandeur than the adjoining Manor House, and the rooms are lined with oak panelling; but it is unsuited to the habits of modern life, and now stands empty.

The village of Enderby is, like its sister hamlet, absolutely rural, with an antiquated little church, much needing such material repair as times and circumstances do not seem to allow. It is dedicated to S. Margaret, and has a fine old font, octagonal in shape, and each side has rudely carved figures upon it. The flat modern ceiling cuts off the point of the chancel arch, and the same disfigurement occurs at the west end, where the two bells are rung from the

floor. In neither village did we see either a nonconformist chapel or a public-house.

In giving some account of Clevedon, I would tell how my own interest in the subject of this little work has drawn forth the friendly notice of one who fully participates in all the enthusiasm and admiration that *In Memoriam* can excite.

Edward Malan, himself a fine scholar and son of a most scholarly father, has greatly assisted me, especially with classical illustrations of the text; and as he visited Clevedon before I went there, and has described Hallam's burial-place so appreciatively, I shall freely use his words when I come to that part of my subject.

How the friendship came about which has found such undying record in this Poem, is soon told. Alfred Tennyson and Arthur H. Hallam met, as undergraduates, at Trinity College, Cambridge, about the year 1828. Tennyson, born in 1809, was the older by one year and a half. Both

these young men were inheritors of remarkable ability—the one being a son of the distinguished historian, and the other a son of an accomplished divine—both, too, were themselves highly educated, and one at least was possessed of the highest genius. Their friendship was not founded on a common participation in the ordinary interests of youth, but they sympathized in poetical temperament and philosophical taste. The mental stature of Hallam, and his pure and beautiful disposition in their college life, are recalled by the Poet in many places, but especially in Poems cix. and following.

In 1829, the two friends competed for the Chancellor's gold medal for the English Prize Poem, the subject being "Timbuctoo," and Tennyson gained it. This College intimacy was continued at both their homes, and Hallam became engaged in marriage to one of Tennyson's sisters. This alliance may have deepened the attachment of the friends; but was not

needed to account for the survivor writing of the departed as "more than my brothers are to me."

Arthur Hallam took his degree at Cambridge in January, 1832, and then lived with his father in London; having been entered on the boards of the Inner Temple, as a student of Law. At the beginning of August, 1833, they went a short tour into Germany, and, in returning to Vienna from Pesth, a wet day caused a slight attack of intermittent fever in Arthur, which was apparently subsiding, when a sudden rush of blood to the head put an instantaneous end to his life, on the 15th September, 1833.

A subsequent "examination showed a weakness of the cerebral vessels, and a want of sufficient energy in the heart." Mr. Hallam adds this sad tribute to his son's memory: "Those whose eyes must long be dim with tears, and whose hopes on this side the tomb are broken down for

ever, may cling, as well as they can, to the poor consolation of believing that a few more years would, in the usual chances of humanity, have severed the frail union of his graceful and manly form, with the pure spirit it enshrined. The remains of Arthur were brought to England, and interred on the 3rd January, 1834, in the *chancel*[a] of Clevedon Church, Somersetshire, belonging to his maternal grandfather, Sir Abraham Elton; a place selected not only from the connexion of kindred, but on account of its still and sequestered situation, on a lone hill that overhangs the Bristol Channel."

My friend, Edward Malan, gives the following graphic account of his visit to Hallam's grave—

"The chief attraction for visitors to Clevedon is the obscure and solitary parish church of St. Andrew, where the great his-

[a] The use of this word misled the Poet himself, who has since exchanged the term "chancel" for "dark church."

torian and his eldest son, Arthur Hallam, are interred. You seek it by the beach and through the fields, and you find it at last, an old and lonely church beside the sea, in a hollow between two green headlands. The path up to it, bordered with ash trees and hawthorns, winds along the side of Church Hill, the first of the two headlands, which shuts it from view until, rounding a green shoulder, you come suddenly upon it, like a ghost. Even then, unless you have brought a mind in harmony, there is little to see, for the spot is so deserted and so lifeless that you seem to have stepped back through centuries, and to be moving in some old-world time. A weird sensation creeps over you, gazing on the ivy and wall-rue, and the path trodden by cottagers —a feeling akin to awe, which reminds you somehow of the poems of Ossian. You are in the presence of these three grey sisters, grey thought, grey silence, grey repose: only clouds, like a troop of mourners,

hurrying up over the waste, only a solemn dirge as the wind sweeps wailing by, only the low faint murmur of the sea. The sun's last beams are on the distant hills, and the tide is ebbing dim and shadowy to the shadowy ocean beyond.

"Inside, the church is old and dim, and filled with a faint odour of age. As the wind rises, mysterious pulses of sound awaken in the rafters overhead. The monuments of the Hallams are not in the chancel, but they are in the manor aisle affixed to the western wall. There are four of them, Arthur Hallam's being one of the two centre tombs.

"A new organ now stands on the vault. The familiar names—familiar, that is, in the classical sense—are those of the Elton family, Hallam's relations. A memorial brass near at hand bears the name of Hallam's maternal grandfather, the Rev. Sir Abraham Charles Elton, fifth baronet, together with the names of the four pre-

ceding baronets; and a marble tablet, close to the site of the old family pew, records the death by drowning of Hallam's two cousins, Abraham and Charles, in 1819, at Weston-super-Mare, when Hallam himself was eight years old. This unhappy occurrence has been commemorated by their father in an elegy entitled *The Brothers*. The moon, when high in the heavens (24 Dec. 1882), strikes through the south window of the aisle, slantingwise on the monuments of the dead."

Mr. Malan goes on wisely to say: "No apology is necessary for calling attention to *In Memoriam*. It has become an heirloom. We may affirm of it, as has been affirmed of another great poem, that it was the work of the Poet's life, his favourite child, for which he stored up the riches of his science and the fruits of his inspiration. He carried it in his bosom like a lover's secret, and added to it from time to time as the tide of sorrow ebbed and flowed.

If the insight thus gained into the workings of a great intellect, brought suddenly to the verge of sorrow, were all the reward that the poem offered, it would still be worth serious study. But we feel as we read that the man has not arrived at his view of truth without much labour, that we are witnessing an endeavour to escape from the coils of doubt, and that we have a victor who has faced and fought his troubles and difficulties."

I may state that we had an interesting conversation with the sexton at Clevedon, Augustus James. He had held the office for about eighteen years, and perfectly remembered the interment of Arthur Hallam. His father, who was sexton for forty-three years, made the vault, and officiated at the burial.

Being astonished by the account of a hearse and mourning coaches traversing the whole distance from Dover to Clevedon, and employing sixteen horses for the

journey, I ventured to ask the late Sir A. H. Elton, if he could corroborate the report, and he replied: "I think there may have been some truth in the statement of the old sexton. I believe that on the Continent very great precautions are required by the authorities, before the remains of a deceased person are permitted to be removed from the place in which the death occurred. I can easily believe that the heavy amount of lead, and other precautions, rendered it necessary to use a large force of horses." A. James says, that "the coffin was carried in every night where they stopped."

Clevedon itself is a semi-seaside place, by no means interesting, at least as we saw it; for the water was thick and had none of the bold features of the genuine ocean. But Clevedon Court, the seat of Sir Edmund H. Elton, to whom we had an introduction, is a picturesque rambling mansion, of which the most beautiful part is many

centuries old, and the grounds are lovely. And I cannot pass by the interest and pleasure we derived from an insight into Sir Edmund's workshop, where, self-taught, he manufactures with his own hands, aided by a crippled lad who is his pupil, the beautiful pottery now well known to connoisseurs as the "Elton ware," and of which he kindly gave us a specimen.

Since this autumn visit (1884), which led to my appealing to Lady Lennard—a surviving sister of Arthur Hallam—on the point of obtaining a portrait of her brother, I have received from this lady the gift of a copy of the volume known as the "Remains in Verse and Prose of Arthur Henry Hallam," edited by his father, and which was privately printed. The interest of its contents was much enhanced to me by there being a portrait of Arthur from a bust by Chantrey, which Lady Lennard considers most like her brother, and therefore most suitable as a frontispiece to my book.

I must add that the plate on which the portrait is engraved is in the possession of Mr. Murray, of Albemarle Street, to whom was entrusted the production of the volume, and he has been most kind in affording facilities for my having a number of copies of the engraving.

But to no one am I so much indebted as to the late Lord Tennyson himself, who examined a previous edition of my "Key," and made some invaluable corrections, which are all printed in *italics*. I would not imply that I have now dived into the metaphysical depths of this marvellous poem; or that its author gave his *imprimatur* to all he did not alter; but as my "Key" was for some time in his possession, I feel sure that it contains nothing which he disapproved: and it is enough for me, if it shall open the door of comfort and sympathy to any who either mourn or doubt.

"I, *in these poems, is not always the author speaking of himself, but the voice of the human race speaking through him. A. T.*"

A KEY TO LORD TENNYSON'S "IN MEMORIAM."

I.

It may be stated, on the highest authority, that the special passage alluded to in the opening stanza, cannot be identified, but *it is Goethe's creed.*

St. Augustine wrote, that we can rise higher on the ladder of life, by trampling down our vices. His words, in a Sermon on the Ascension, are, *De vitiis nostris scalam nobis facimus, si vitia ipsa calcamus.*

Longfellow published a Poem, not earlier than 1842, which he called "The Ladder of St. Augustine;" and more recently, Lowell, another American Poet, and Minister Plenipotentiary in London, adopted a similar idea when he said,

> "'Tis sorrow builds the shining ladder up,
> Whose golden rounds are our calamities,
> Whereon our feet firm planting, nearer God
> The spirit climbs, and hath its eyes unseal'd."

The "dead selves" of Tennyson are neither our vices nor our calamities; but, rather, our general experiences, which all perish as they happen; and of these, in his own case, the special loss he had sustained in the death of Hallam (his "more than brother"—his *dimidium sui*, "bosom-friend and half of life") ought to rouse him to soar into "higher things;" rather than leave him to be pointed at, as "the man that loved and lost" (see Poems xxvii., 4, and lxxxv., 1); and all that he had before been, as now "over-worn," and prostrated by this one bereavement.

But it was difficult to anticipate in the future a gain to match the loss he had sustained; and to appropriate interest, *i.e.*, reap the fruit of tears that he was now shedding. Love, however, shall uphold his

grief with sustaining power; for it is better to be grief-mad, and "dance with death" —(singing and dancing being a custom at ancient funerals)—than become a spectacle of scorn for "the victor Hours" to deride, after they have effaced his love-born sorrow.

II.

But the struggle back to past contentment and happiness is difficult; and the "Old Yew" of the churchyard seems to typify his present state of feeling.

Its roots and fibres stretch downward, and hold the skull and bones of the dead; like as his thoughts cling to his departed friend. Its "dusk" or shadow is before the church clock,[a] which strikes the hours of mortality, and this harmonizes with his life of mourning.

The tree preserves its "thousand years of gloom," unchanged by the seasons which

[a] The scene is not laid in Somersby Churchyard, as there is no clock in the Church tower.

affect other things—the "old yew" continues always the same—

> "And gazing on thee, sullen tree,
> Sick for thy stubborn hardihood,
> I seem to fail from out my blood,
> And grow incorporate into thee."

"Sick for" means, desirous of.

It might seem as if the Poet, whose scientific allusions are always so striking and correct, had overlooked, when he wrote this Poem, that the yew bore blossom and seed, like other trees: but it was not so. *Of course, the Poet always knew, that a tree which bears a berry must have a blossom; but Sorrow only saw the winter gloom of the foliage.*

Observe the recent introduction of Poem xxxix.; also the description, near the beginning of "The Holy Grail"—

> "They sat
> Beneath a world-old yew tree, darkening half
> The cloisters, on a gustful April morn
> That puff'd the swaying branches into smoke.

O, brother, I have seen this yew-tree smoke,
Spring after spring, for half a hundred years."

It will be seen, in the later Poem, how a comparison with the gloomy yew has been modified.

III.

"Sorrow, cruel fellowship," from which he cannot disengage himself, now reigns within him, and distorts with "lying lip"[a] all Nature and her beneficent workings; making these seem to have no purpose or end. All which is but an echo of his own dark feelings. Shall he then believe this false guide—

"Embrace her as my natural good;
Or crush her, like a vice of blood,
Upon the threshold of the mind?"

reject, and turn away from the impostures of a sorrowing imagination?

[a] Critics have regarded the term "lying lip" as too harsh; but in Poem xxxix. it is again applied to sorrow—

"What whisper'd from her lying lips?"

See also Psalm cxx. 2.

IV.

In sleep there is no struggle of the will; and he communes with his own heart, which is beating so low; a condition that must be caused by a sense of "something lost."

"Break," he says, still addressing his heart, but in metaphor;

> "Break, thou deep vase of chilling tears,
> That grief hath shaken into frost."

This must refer to the scientific fact, that water can be lowered in temperature below the freezing point, without solidifying; but it expands at once into ice if disturbed; and the suddenness of the expansion breaks the containing vessel.

Clouds of undefined trouble, such as "dreams are made of," pass "below the darken'd eyes," that is, figure themselves on the brain under the eyelids; but on awaking, the will reasserts its power, and

protests against the folly of such mourning. He would therefore dismiss the phantom, Sorrow.

V.

He sometimes hesitates, as at something half sinful, when giving expression to his sadness; because words at best only partially declare what the Soul feels; just as outward Nature cannot fully reveal the inner life.

But "after all" words act like narcotics, and numb pain: so, as if putting on "weeds," the garb of mourning, he will wrap himself over in words; though these, like coarse clothes on the body, give no more than an outline of his "large grief."

VI.

The "common" expressions of sympathy with our trouble are very "commonplace"—

"Vacant chaff well-meant for grain."

A friend asks, "Why grieve?" "Other friends remain;" "Loss is common to the race;" as Hamlet's mother says, "All that live must die." Is this comfort? rather the contrary. We know it is so—

> "Never morning wore
> To evening, but some heart did break."

The father drinks his son's health at the war, in the moment when that son is shot.

The mother prays for her sailor-boy when

> "His heavy-shotted hammock-shroud
> Drops in his vast and wandering grave."

The girl is dressing before the glass, and strives to array herself most becomingly for her expected lover; and he meanwhile is either drowned in the ford, or killed by a fall from his horse—

> "O what to her shall be the end?
> And what to me remains of good?
> To her perpetual maidenhood,
> And unto me no second friend."

These were all as unconscious of disaster as was the Poet, who, "to please him well," was writing to Hallam in the very hour that he died.

There is a fine passage in Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Dying," which contains a like rumination on the uncertainty of life.

"The wild fellow in *Petronius* that escaped upon a broken table from the furies of a shipwreck, as he was sunning himself upon the rocky shore, espied a man rolled upon his floating bed of waves, ballasted with sand in the folds of his garments, and carried by his civil enemy the sea towards the shore to find a grave; and it cast him into some sad thoughts; that peradventure this man's wife in some part of the Continent, safe and warm, looks next month for the good man's return; or it may be his son knows nothing of the tempest; or his father thinks of that affectionate kiss which still is warm upon the good old man's cheek ever since he took a kind farewell, and he weeps with joy to think how blessed he shall be when his beloved boy returns into the circle of his father's arms.

"These are the thoughts of mortals, this is the end and sum of all their designs; a dark night and an ill guide, a boisterous sea and a broken cable, an hard rock and a rough wind dashed in pieces

the fortune of a whole family, and they that shall weep loudest for the accident, are not yet entered into the storm, and yet have suffered shipwreck."

VII.

He persists in indulging his melancholy, and so creeps, "like a guilty thing," at early morning to the door of the house in London where Hallam had lived—Wimpole Street—but this only serves to remind him that

"He is not here; but far away."

The revival of busy movement on a wet morning in "the long unlovely street,"[a] is vividly described—

"The noise of life begins again,
And ghastly thro' the drizzling rain
On the bald street breaks the blank day."

VIII.

He next compares himself to the disap-

[a] It is said of a celebrated clerical wit, that almost his last words were, "All things come to an end"—a pause—"except Wimpole Street."

pointed lover who "alights" from his horse, calls at the home of his mistress,

"And learns her gone and far from home."

So, as the disappointed lover, to whom the whole place has at once become a desert, wanders into the garden, and culls a rain-beaten flower, which she had fostered; even thus will he cherish and plant "this poor flower of poesy" on Hallam's tomb,[a] because his friend when alive had been pleased with his poetic power.

IX.

This poem commences an address to the ship that brings Hallam's body from Vienna to England—

"My lost Arthur's loved remains."

No words can be more touching than

[a] This reminds one of the *Jour des morts*—All Souls' Day, or The Day of the Dead, when it is a Continental custom to visit the graves of relatives and friends, with pious offerings of flowers, &c.

his appeal to the vessel,[a] for care and tenderness in transporting its precious freight. He bids it come quickly; "spread thy full wings," hoist every sail; "ruffle thy mirror'd mast;" for the faster the ship is driven through the water, the more will the reflected mast be "ruffled" on its agitated surface. May no rude wind "perplex thy sliding keel," until Phosphor the morning star, Venus shines; and during the night may the lights[b] above and the winds around be gentle as the sleep of him—

> "My Arthur, whom I shall not see,
> Till all my widow'd race be run—"

until my life, bereaved of its first affection, be over.

In Poem xvii., 5, the same line occurs—

[a] This invocation to the ship reminds one of Horace's appeal to the vessel that was to bring Virgil home:—

> *Navis, quæ tibi creditum*
> *Debes Virgilium, finibus Atticis*
> *Reddas incolumem, precor;*
> *Et serves animæ dimidium meæ.*
> Lib. I., Ode 3.

[b] "Sphere" *glomera.*

"Till all my widow'd race be run," and it agrees with St. Paul's declaration, 2 Tim., iv., 7, "I have finished my course." The words *race* and *course* are synonymous, and refer to the foot-races of the ancients. "More than my brothers are to me," is repeated in P. lxxix., 1.

X.

Very beautifully is the picture continued of the ship's passage, and he appeals to it for safely conducting

"Thy dark freight, a vanish'd life."

The placid scene, which he had imagined as attending the vessel, harmonizes with the home-bred fancy, that it is sweeter

"To rest beneath the clover sod,
That takes the sunshine and the rains;"

that is, to be buried in the open churchyard;

"Or where the kneeling hamlet drains
The chalice of the grapes of God."[a]

[a] This fruit of the vine, Matt. xxvi., 29.

that is, in the chancel of the church, near the altar rails; than if, together with the ship, "the roaring wells" of the sea

> "Should gulf him fathom deep in brine;
> And hands so often clasp'd in mine,
> Should toss with tangle[a] and with shells."

XI.

This Poem would describe a calm and quiet day in October—late autumn.

No doubt, the scenery described *does not refer to Clevedon, but to some Lincolnshire wold, from which the whole range from marsh to the sea was visible.*

The stillness of the spot is just broken by the sound of the horse chestnut fall-

[a] "Tangle," or "oar-weed," *Laminaria digitata*, says the Algologist, "is never met with but at extreme tide-limits, where some of its broad leather-like fronds may be seen darkly overhanging the rocks, while others, a little lower down, are rising and dipping in the water like sea-serpents floated by the waves." Plato, *Rep.*, x., has a noble comparison from the story of Glaucus (498): "We must regard the soul as drowned (διακείμενον) like the sea-god, Glaucus: who, buffetted and insulted by the waves, sank, clustered with ὄστρεα τε, καὶ φύκια, καὶ πέτρας."

ing[a] through the dead leaves, and these are reddening to their own fall. No time of the year is more quiet, not even is the insect abroad: the waves just swell and fall noiselessly, and this reminds him of

> "The dead calm in that noble breast
> Which heaves but with the heaving deep."

XII.

An ecstacy follows: in which the soul of the Poet seems to mount, like a dove rising into the heavens with a message of woe tied under her wings; and so the disembodied soul leaves its "mortal ark"—"our earthly house of this tabernacle"—(2 Cor. v., 1) and flees away

> "O'er ocean-mirrors rounded large"

(the sea line constantly expanding and

[a] In the month of October, 1884, I walked in the thickly wooded precincts of Hughenden Manor, the seat of the Earl of Beaconsfield; and I never heard the horse chestnuts patter to the ground as then and there. Quite ripe, they were constantly falling; and as they touched the gravelled walk the shell opened, and out sprang the richly coloured chestnut.—A. G.

always being circular), until the ship comes in sight, when it lingers "on the marge," the edge of the sea, weeping with the piteous cry—

> "Is this the end of all my care?
> Is this the end? Is this the end?"

Then it flies in sport about the prow of the vessel, and after this seems to

> "return
> To where the body sits, and learn,
> That I have been an hour away."

XIII.

The tears shed by the widower, when he wakes from a dream of his deceased wife, and "moves his doubtful arms" to find her place empty; are like the tears he himself is weeping over "a loss for ever new," a terrible void where there had been social intercourse, and a "silence" that will never be broken. For he is lamenting

"the comrade of my choice,
An awful thought, a life removed,
The human-hearted man I loved,
A Spirit, not a breathing voice."

Hallam is now only a remembrance—no longer endowed with bodily functions, and the survivor cannot quite accept what has happened.

He therefore asks Time to teach him "many years"—for years to come—the real truth, and make him feel that these strange things, over which his tears are shed, are not merely a prolonged dream; and he begs that his fancies, hovering over the approaching ship, may quite realise that it brings no ordinary freight, but actually the mortal remains of his friend.

XIV.

The difficulty in apprehending his complete loss is further shown by his address to the ship, saying, that if it had arrived in

port, and he saw the passengers step across the plank to shore; and amongst them came Hallam himself, and they renewed all their former friendship; and Hallam, unchanged in every respect, heard his tale of sorrow with surprise:

"I should not feel it to be strange."

Both this and the previous Poem express the difficulty we feel in realising the death of some one who is dear to us. So Cowper wrote, after losing his mother, and in expectation that she would yet return:

"What ardently I wish'd, I long believed,
And disappointed still, was still deceived."

XV.

A stormy change in the weather occurs: the winds "roar from yonder dropping day," that is, from the west, into which the daylight is sinking. And all the sights and sounds of tempest alarm him for the safety of the ship, and

"But for fancies which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Athwart a plane of molten glass,[a]
I scarce could brook the strain and stir
That makes the barren branches loud."

Yet, in fear that it may not be so—the sea calm and the wind still—"the wild unrest" would lead him to "dote and pore on" the threatening cloud, and the fiery sunset.

XVI.

This Poem is highly metaphysical. He asks whether Sorrow, which is his abiding feeling, can be such a changeling, as to alternate in his breast betwixt "calm despair" (see P. xi., 4) and "wild unrest?" (see P. xv., 4); or does she only just take this "touch of change," as calm or storm prevails? knowing no more of transient form, than does a lake that holds "the

[a] In Job xxxvii., 18, we read, "Hast thou with him spread out the sky, which is strong, and as a molten looking glass?" This term applies equally well to the sea.

shadow of a lark," when reflected on its surface.

Being distinct from bodily pain, Sorrow is more like the reflection than the thing reflected. But the shock he has received has made his mind confused, and he is like a ship that strikes on a rock and founders. He becomes a

> "delirious man,
> Whose fancy fuses old and new,
> And flashes into false and true,
> And mingles all without a plan."[a]

XVII.

He hails the ship—"thou comest"—and feels as if his own whispered prayer for its safety, had been helping to waft it steadily across the sea. In spirit, he had seen it move

> "thro' circles of the bounding sky"—

the horizon at sea being always circular (see P. xii., 3)—and he would wish its

[a] See 2 Cor. xii., 2.

speedy arrival, inasmuch as it brings "all I love."

For doing this, he invokes a blessing upon all its future voyages. It is now bringing

> "The dust of him I shall not see
> Till all my widowed race be run."[a]

XVIII.

The ship arrives, the "dear remains" are landed, and the burial is to take place.

It is something, worth the mourner's having, that he can stand on English ground where his friend has been laid, and know that the violet will spring from his ashes.

Laertes says of Ophelia,

> "Lay her in the earth
> And from her fair and unpolluted flesh
> May violets spring!"

A beautiful invitation follows to those, who are sometimes irreverent bearers:

[a] See P. ix., 5.

"Come then, pure hands, and bear the head
That sleeps or wears the mask of sleep,
And come, whatever loves to weep,
And hear the ritual of the dead."[a]

Even yet, before the grave is closed, he would like, as Elisha did on the Shunammite woman's child, to cast himself, and

"thro' his lips impart
The life that almost dies in me;"

but still he resolves to form the firmer resolution, and to submit; though meanwhile treasuring the look and words that are past and gone for ever.

XIX.

From the Danube to the Severn—from Vienna to Clevedon—the body has been conveyed, and was interred by the estuary

[a] The tenant farmers on the Clevedon estate were the bearers. The Rev. William Newland Pedder, who was Vicar of Clevedon for forty years, and died in 1871, read the burial service. The "familiar names" are those of the Elton family, which are recorded both on brass and marble in the church.

of the latter river, where the village of Clevedon stands.[a]

The Wye, a tributary of the Severn, is also tidal; and when deepened by the sea flowing inward, its babbling ceases; but the noise recurs when the sea flows back.

So does the Poet's power of expressing his grief alternate: at times he is too full in heart to find utterance; he "brims with sorrow"—but after awhile, as when "the wave again is vocal in its wooded" banks,

> "My deeper anguish also falls,
> And I can speak a little then."

[a] The corpse was landed at Dover, and was brought by sixteen black horses all the way to Clevedon—so says Augustus James, who, when a boy, witnessed the interment. Sir A. H. Elton, the late Baronet, kindly corroborated this statement. Besides the coffin, there was a square iron box, deposited in the vault, which may have contained

> "The darken'd heart that beat no more."

It is certain that the Poet always thought that the ship put in at Bristol.

Hallam's family resided in London, which accounts for the mourners coming from so great a distance. Augustus James told me, that the funeral procession consisted of a hearse and three mourning coaches, each of which was drawn by four horses; and he saw the sixteen animals under cover after their journey. My friend, Mr. Edward Malan, heard the same story from A. James.

XX.

He knows the "lesser grief" that can be told, also the "deeper anguish which cannot be spoken:" his spirits are thus variably affected.

In his lighter mood, he laments as servants mourn for a good master who has died:

> "It will be hard, they say, to find
> Another service such as this."

But he is also visited by a sense of deeper deprivation, such as children feel when they lose a father, and

> "see the vacant chair, and think,
> How good! how kind! and he is gone."

XXI.

This Poem opens as if Hallam's grave was in the churchyard, where grasses waved; but it was not so, he was buried inside Clevedon church.

The Poet imagines the reproofs, with which passers-by will visit him for his unrestrained grief. He would "make weak-

ness weak:" would parade his pain to court sympathy, and gain credit for constancy; and another says, that a display of private sorrow is quite inappropriate at times, when great political changes impend, and Science every month is evolving some new secret.

He replies, that his song is but like that of the linnet—joyous indeed when her brood first flies, but sad when the nest has been rifled of her young.

XXII.

For "four sweet years," from flowery spring to snowy winter, they had lived in closest friendship;

> "But where the path we walk'd began
> To slant the fifth autumnal slope,"

"the Shadow fear'd of man," grim Death, "broke our fair companionship."

Hallam died on the 15th September, 1833, and the survivor, eagerly pursuing, can find him no more, but

"thinks, that somewhere in the waste
The Shadow sits and waits for me."

His own spirit becomes darkened by gloomy apprehensions of superimpending calamity.

XXIII.

Feeling his extreme loneliness, yet "breaking into songs by fits" (which proves that *In Memoriam* was written at intervals),[a] he wanders sometimes to where the cloaked Shadow is sitting—Death,

"Who keeps the keys of all the creeds"—

inasmuch as only when we die shall we know the whole truth; and "falling lame" on his way, that is, stumbling in his vain enquiries as to whence he came and whither he is going, he can only grasp one feeling, which is, that all is miserably changed since they were in company—

[a] *It is a fact, that the Poem was written at both various times and places—through a course of years, and where their author happened to be, in Lincolnshire, London, Essex, Gloucestershire, Wales, anywhere, as the spirit moved him.*

friends enjoying life together, travelling in foreign lands, and indulging in scholarly communion on classic subjects.

XXIV.

But, after all, was their happiness perfect? No, the very sun, the "fount of Day," has spots on its surface—"wandering isles of night." If all had been wholly good and fair, this earth would have remained the Paradise it has never looked, "since Adam left his garden," as appears in the earlier editions; but now the line runs,

"Since our first sun arose and set."

Does "the haze of grief" then magnify the past, as things look larger in a fog?[a] Or does his present lowness of spirits set the past in relief, as projections are more

[a] The effect of vapour in magnifying objects is shown towards the end of the Idyll, "Guinevere," where it says

"The moony vapour rolling round the King,
Who seem'd the phantom of a Giant in it."

Can "the haze of grief" refer to the tear, which acts as a magnifying lens?

apparent when you are beneath them? Or is the past from being far off always in glory, as distance lends enchantment to the view; and so the world becomes orbed

> "into the perfect star
> We saw not, when we moved therein?"

We are told that, if we were placed in the moon, we should see the Earth as—"the perfect star"—having a shining surface, and being thirteen times larger than the moon itself.

XXV.

All he knows is, that whilst with Hallam, there was Life. They went side by side, and upheld the daily burden.

He himself moved light as a carrier bird in air, and delighted in the weight he bore because Love shared it; and since he transferred half of every pain to his dear companion, he himself was never weary in either heart or limb.

XXVI.

Dismal and dreary as life has become, he nevertheless wishes to live, if only to prove the stedfastness of his affection. And he asks that if the all-seeing Eye, which already perceives the future rottenness of the living tree, and the far off ruin of the now standing tower, can detect any coming indifference in him—any failure of Love—then may the "Shadow waiting with the keys" "shroud me from my proper scorn;"[a] may Death hide me from my own self-contempt!

"In Him is no before." Jehovah is simply, *I am*, to whom foresight and foreknowledge cannot be attributed, since past and future are equally present.

The morn breaks over Indian seas, because they are to the east of us.

[a] "My proper scorn"—*proprius*—is scorn of myself, an imprecation. See Lancelot's self-condemnation at the end of "Lancelot and Elaine."

XXVII.

He neither envies the cage-born bird "that never knew the summer woods," and is content without liberty; nor the beast that lives uncontrolled by conscience; nor the heart that never loved; "nor any want-begotten rest," that is, repose arising from defective sensibility.

On the contrary,

> "I hold it true, whate'er befall;
> I feel it, when I sorrow most;
> 'Tis better to have loved and lost
> Than never to have loved at all."

Seneca in Epistle 99 says, *Magis gauderes quod habueras quam mœreres quod amiseras.* —See P. lxxxv., 1.

The Poem seems to halt here, and begin afresh with a description of Christmastide.

XXVIII.

Christmas Eve at Somersby, and possibly at the end of the year 1833. If so, throughout the year he had been at ease,

until the blow came—he had "slept and woke with pain," and then he almost wished he might never more hear the Christmas bells.

But a calmer spirit seems to come over him: as he listens to the Christmas peals rung at four neighbouring[a] churches, and the sound soothes him with tender associations:

> "But they my troubled spirit rule,
> For they controll'd me when a boy;
> They bring me sorrow touch'd with joy,
> The merry, merry bells of Yule."

Yule is Christmas, a jubilee which brings glad tidings of great joy to all people.

XXIX.

Having such "compelling cause to grieve" over the decease of Hallam,

> "as daily vexes household peace"—

for death is ever invading some home—

[a] The churches are not to be identified. Those in the neighbourhood of Somersby have too small belfries to allow of change ringing. The sounds may have been only in the Poet's mind.

how can they venture to keep Christmas Eve as usual? He is absent, who when amongst them was so eminently social. But it must be done. "Use and wont," "old sisters of a day gone by," still demand what has been customary. "They too will die," and new habits succeed.

To the fourteenth chapter of Walter Scott's "Pirate," there is the following motto from "Old Play," which meant Scott's own invention:

"We'll keep our customs. What is law itself
But old establish'd custom? What religion
(I mean with one half of the men that use it)
Save the good use and wont that carries them
To worship how and where their fathers worshipp'd?
All things resolve to custom. We'll keep ours."

XXX.

The Christian festival proceeds, and there is the family gathering, with such games as are common at this season; but sadness weighs on all, for they entertain "an awful sense of one

mute shadow"—Hallam's wraith—being present and watching them.

They sit in silence, then break into singing

> "A merry song we sang with him
> Last year."

This seems to identify the time to be Christmas, 1833, as Hallam died on 15th September, 1833, but was not buried until January, 1834.

They comfort themselves with the conviction that the dead retain "their mortal sympathy," and still feel with those they have left behind. The soul, a "keen seraphic flame," pierces

> "From orb to orb, from veil to veil,"

and so traverses the universe.

Was the anniversary of our Saviour's birth ever hailed in terms more sublime and beautiful!

> "Rise, happy morn, rise, holy morn,
> Draw forth the cheerful day from night:
> O Father, touch the east, and light
> The light that shone when Hope was born."

XXXI.

The mind of the poet has now taken a more strictly religious view of the situation; and he would like to learn the secrets of the grave from the experience of Lazarus.

Did Lazarus in death yearn to hear his sister Mary weeping for him? If she asked him, when restored to life, where he was during his four days of entombment;

> "There lives no record of reply,"

which, if given, might have "added praise to praise"—that is, might have sealed and confirmed the promise that "blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

As it was, the neighbours met and offered congratulations, and their cry was,

> "Behold a man raised up by Christ!
> The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
> He told it not; or something seal'd
> The lips of that Evangelist."

It is only St. John who records the miracle.

XXXII.

At a subsequent visit to Simon's house in Bethany, where both Lazarus and Mary were present, Mary's eyes, looking alternately at her brother who had been restored to life, and at our Lord who had revived him, are "homes of silent prayer;" and one strong affection overpowers every other sentiment, when her "ardent gaze" turns from the face of Lazarus, "and rests upon the Life"—Christ, the author and giver of life. *Vita vera, vita ipsa.*

Her whole spirit is then so "borne down by gladness," that

> "She bows, she bathes the Saviour's feet
> With costly spikenard and with tears."[a]

No lives are so blessed as those which consist of "faithful prayers:" no attachments so enduring as those which are based on the higher love of God.

But are there any souls so pure as to

[a] John, xii., 3

have reached this higher range of feeling; or, if there be, what blessedness can equal theirs?

XXXIII.

This Poem is abstruse, and requires thought and care for the interpretation of the Poet's meaning.

It seems to be an address of warning and reproof to a moral pantheist, who fancies that he has attained a higher and purer air, by withholding his faith from all "form," and recognising Deity in everything—his faith having "centre everywhere."

This sceptic is warned from disturbing the pious woman, who is happy in her prayers to a personal God; for they bring an "early heaven" on her life. Her faith is fixed on "form;" and to flesh and blood she has linked a truth divine, by seeing God incarnate in the person of Christ.

The pantheist must take care for himself, that, whilst satisfied

"In holding by the law within,"

the guidance of his own reason, he does not after all fail in a sinful world, "for want of such a type," as the life of Christ on earth affords.

"A life that leads melodious days," is like that of Vopiscus, in his Tiburtine villa, as described by his friend, Statius, I., iii., 20.

—ceu veritus turbare Vopisci
Pieriosque dies et habentes carmina somnos.

XXXIV.

His own dim consciousness should teach him thus much, that Life will never be extinguished. Else all here is but dust and ashes. The earth, "this round of green," and sun, "this orb of flame," are but "fantastic beauty"—such as a wild Poet might invent, who has neither conscience nor aim.

Even God can be nothing to the writer, if all around him is doomed to perish; and he will not himself wait in patience, but rather "sink to peace;" and, like the birds that are charmed by the serpent[a] into its mouth, he will "drop head-foremost in the jaws of vacant darkness," and so cease to exist.

XXXV.

And yet, if a trustworthy voice from the grave should testify, that there is no life beyond this world; even then he would endeavour to keep alive so sweet a thing as Love, during the brief span of mortal existence.

But still there would come

"The moanings of the homeless sea,"

and the sound of streams disintegrating and washing down the rocks to form future

[a] A South African snake—*bucephalus Capensis*—commonly called the "Boom-slange"—attracts birds into its mouth as prey, drawing them by an irresistible fascination. Dr. Smith, in his "Zoology of South Africa," describes the process.

land surfaces—"Æonian hills," the formations of whole æons being thus dissolved—and Love itself would languish under

"The sound of that forgetful shore,"

those new lands in which all things are obliterated and forgotten—knowing that its own death was impending.

But the case is idly put. If such extinguishing Death were from the first seen as it is when it comes, Love would either not exist; or else would be a mere fellowship of coarse appetites, like those of the Satyr, who crushes the grape for drunken revelry, and basks and battens in the woods.

XXXVI.

Although, even in manhood, the great truths of Religion only

"darkly join,
Deep-seated in our mystic frame"—

since at best we only see as through a glass

darkly: we nevertheless bless His name, who "made them current coin," so as to be generally intelligible. This was done by the teaching of Parables.

For Divine Wisdom, having to deal with mortal powers, conveyed sacred truth through "lowly doors," by embodying it in earthly similitudes; because "closest words" will not explain Divine things, owing to the imperfection of human language; "and so the Word had breath," "God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. iii., 16, and 1 John, 14), and by good works wrought the best of all creeds, which the labourer in the field, the mason, the grave-digger,

> "And those wild eyes that watch the wave
> In roarings round the coral reef,"

even the savage of the Pacific Islands, can see and understand, being conveyed to him through both the miracles and parables of the Gospel.

XXXVII.

He imagines Urania, the heavenly Muse, to reprove him for venturing on sacred ground, and commenting on religious themes; as she would have him confine his steps to his own Parnassus, and there earn the laurel crown.

But his own tragic Muse, Melpomene, replies with the apology, that though unworthy to speak of holy mysteries, yet with his earthly song he had striven to soothe his own aching heart, and render a due tribute to human love; and inasmuch as the comfort he had drawn was "clasp'd in truth reveal'd," had its foundation in the Gospel: he daringly

> "loiter'd in the Master's field,
> And darken'd sanctities with song."

Many readers of *In Memoriam* will have thanked its author for these trespasses upon the Holy Land, feeling indeed there was no profane intrusion.

Some will regret that he has changed the original line, "and dear as sacramental wine," into "and dear to me as sacred wine:" the purpose, one supposes, was that the reader should see that he spoke only for himself—"to me"—the meaning is unchanged, but the sound is rather flat.

XXXVIII.

The sadness of his heart has fully returned, and the journey of life is dull and weary. The skies above and the prospect before him are no longer what they used to be, when Hallam was by. "The blowing season," when *plants are blossoming:* the "herald melodies of spring," when the birds proclaim that winter is past, give him no joy; but in his own songs he finds a "gleam of solace;" and if after death there be any consciousness retained of what has been left upon earth,

> "Then are these songs I sing of thee
> Not all ungrateful to thine ear."

XXXIX.

This Poem has been recently introduced, as already stated (see P. ii.). The Yew tree does really blossom, and form fruit and seed like other trees, though we may not notice it.

The Poet now says, that his "random stroke" on the tree brings off

> "Fruitful cloud and living smoke;"

Also that at the proper season

> "Thy gloom is kindled at the tips."

The fact is, that the flower is bright yellow in colour, but very minute; and when the tree is shaken, the pollen comes off like dust, and then the tree seems to resume its old gloom.

So the spirit of the Poet may brighten for a moment, and then return to its accustomed melancholy.

XL.

He wishes "the widow'd hour" when he lost his friend, could be forgotten, or rather recalled like an occasion when the bride leaves her first home for "other realms of love." There are tears then, but April tears—rain and sunshine mixed; and as the bride's future office may be to rear and teach another generation—uniting grand-parents with grand-children—so he has no doubt that to Hallam

> "is given
> A life that bears immortal fruit
> In such great offices as suit
> The full-grown energies of heaven."

But then comes this difference. The bride will return in course of time with her baby, and all at her old home will be happier for her absence—whereas

> "thou and I have shaken hands,
> Till growing winters lay me low;
> My paths are in the fields I know,
> But thine in undiscover'd lands."

XLI.

Whilst together upon earth they could advance in company, though Hallam's spirit and intellect were ever soaring upwards. Now, the links which united them are lost, and he can no longer partake in his friend's transformations. So, (folly though it be,) he wishes that, by an effort of will, he could

> "leap the grades of life and light,
> And flash at once, my friend, to thee."
>
> See P. xcv., 9.

For, though he has no vague dread of death and "the gulfs beneath," yet the chilling thought comes over him, that in death he may not be able to overtake his friend, but evermore remain "a life behind" him,

> "Through all the secular to be"—

all future ages: and that so he shall be his mate no more, which is his great trouble.

> "The howlings of forgotten fields"

is probably a classical allusion to those "fields" of mystic horror, over which the spirits of the departed were supposed to range, uttering wild shrieks and cries. Has Dante no such allusion?[a]

This Poem intimates the idea of progress and advancement after death.

XLII.

He reproaches himself for these fancies; for inasmuch as it was only unity of place which gave them the semblance of equality here—Hallam being always really ahead—why may not "Place retain us still,"[b] when I too am dead, and can be trained and taught anew by this "lord of large experience?"

[a] In Cary's translation of Dante's "Hell," canto iii., line 21, we find this note on what Dante and Virgil encountered in the infernal shades—"*Post hæc omnia ad loca tartarea, et ad os infernalis baratri deductus sum, qui simile videbatur puteo, loca vero eadem horridis tenebris, fœtoribus exhalantibus, stridoribus quoque et nimiis plena erant ejulatibus, juxta quem infernum vermis erat infinitæ magnitudinis, ligatus maxima catena.*" *Alberici Virio*, § 9.

[b] If time be merged and lost in eternity, why may not place, all sense of locality, be equally lost in infinitude of space?

"And what delights can equal those
That stir the spirit's inner deeps,
When one that loves but knows not, reaps
A truth from one that loves and knows?"

There are no pleasures so sweet, as the imbibings of instruction from the lips of those who are both superior and dear to us.

It is evident that Hallam's translation in death, had exalted his friend's estimation of him whilst living, for see the Poet's note at the end of Poem xcvii.

XLIII.

If, in the intermediate state, we find that

"Sleep and death be truly one"—

as St. Paul himself might lead us to believe—

"And every spirit's folded bloom"

—the slumbering soul being like a flower which closes at night—reposed, unconscious of the passage of time, but with silent traces of the past marked upon it;[a]

[a] I remember holding a serious conversation with an enlightened physician, some years ago, who said, "I hardly

then the lives of all, from the beginning of time, would contain in their shut-up state a record of all that had ever happened;

"And love will last as pure and whole,
As when he loved me here in Time,
And at the spiritual prime
Rewaken with the dawning soul."

At the resurrection, the old affection will revive.

XLIV.

How fare the happy dead? Here man continuously grows, but he forgets what happened

"before
God shut the doorways of his head;"

that is, before the skull of the infant closed. Yet sometimes

"A little flash, a mystic hint"

like to venture the theory, but it almost seems to me, as if what is now said and thought becomes written on the physical brain, like a result of photography, and that a revelation of this transcript, may be our real accuser at the day of judgment." Had Shakespeare any such notion, in making Macbeth say,

"Raze out the written troubles of the brain?"

suggests the possibility of a previous existence.[a] "If death so taste Lethean springs," as to leave a trace on the soul of what had happened upon earth—the Poet here makes Lethe produce remembrance, instead of forgetfulness, which is its normal effect. Dante describes the double power of the mythic stream in Purgatory (Can. xxviii., l. 134)—

> "On this, devolved with power to take away
> Remembrance of offence; on that, to bring
> Remembrance back of every good deed done.
> From whence its name of Lethe on this part;
> On the other, Eunoe."—CARY'S Translation.

[a] Wordsworth entertains the notion of our having lived before in his fine Ode, "Intimations of Immortality," wherein he says,

> "Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:
> The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
> Hath had elsewhere its setting,
> And cometh from afar," &c.

See Sir W. Scott's "Journal," where a like impression is acknowledged on 17th February, 1828.

Tennyson also says in "The Two Voices:"

> "Moreover, something is or seems
> That touches me with mystic gleams,
> Like glimpses of forgotten dreams—
>
> Of something felt, like something here,
> Of something done, I know not where,
> Such as no language may declare."

And so, "in the long harmonious years" of death, some dim touch of earthly things may reach Hallam whilst ranging with his equals. If this should be allowed, "O turn thee round," "resolve the doubt," whether thou art conscious of a previous life, and listen to my guardian angel, who will tell thee all about us here.

XLV.

The child, still in its mother's arms, has no consciousness of its own individual life and identity; and it is with its growth that it acquires a sense of separate and isolated being, independent of all around.

The acquisition of this consciousness may be the use of "blood and breath," which otherwise would have achieved no worthy end; as we should have to learn ourselves afresh after the second birth of death, if these had not assured us of our indisputable personality.

XLVI.

In this life we experience "thorn and flower," grief and joy; and the past becomes mercifully shaded as time goes on, otherwise the retrospect would be intolerable. But hereafter all shadow on what has happened will be removed, and all will be "clear from marge to marge;" and the five years of earthly friendship will be the "richest field" in the "eternal landscape."

Yet this would be a limited range for Love, which ought to extend without any circumscription,

"A rosy warmth from marge to marge,"

its expansion interminable.

XLVII.

This great and religious Poem has been absurdly said to teach Pantheism, which these stanzas refute; or perhaps they rather deny the doctrine of Spinoza, if that be clearly understood.

At any rate, to be conscious of "a separate whole"—a distinct individuality—and yet merge at last

> "in the general Soul,
> Is faith as vague as all unsweet:
> Eternal form shall still divide
> The eternal soul from all beside;
> And I shall know him when we meet."

St. Paul is not more distinct and emphatic upon our individuality hereafter, when he says, we shall "be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven," 2 Cor. v., 2; that is, we shall put on a spiritual *body*, that will give identity and form.

Delighting in the thought of

> "Enjoying each the other's good,"

he feels to have attracted the approving Shade of Hallam, and this reluctantly fades away, with the tender parting:

> "Farewell, we lose ourselves in light."

If indeed we are to be merged in the universal Soul, let us have at least one more

parting, before we lose our individualities in the Great Being.

XLVIII.

This Poem disclaims any attempt at settling religious difficulties. The verses are of "sorrow born," the result of private grief; and if misunderstood, and open to the charge of attempting to solve such grave questions of doubt as affect some minds, they would deserve the scorn of men.

Sorrow does not undertake severe argument; but if a "slender shade of doubt" flits before it, it would make this doubt a "vassal unto love," and yield to Love's supreme authority.

Love ought to be our ruler and guide, and these lays of sadness are merely

> "Short swallow-flights of song, that dip
> Their wings in tears, and skim away."

XLIX.

He compares the "random influences" of Art, Nature, and the Schools, to light breaking in shivered lances on the dappled water. For even so does "the sullen surface" of the mind become "crisp" and curled with the wave of thought, the eddy of fancy, the air of song.

The transient passenger may look and go on his way, but must not blame such mental perturbations: for

> "Beneath all fancied hopes and fears,
> Ay me,[a] the sorrow deepens down,
> Whose muffled motions blindly drown
> The bases of my life in tears."

L.

He invokes Hallam's spirit to be near him in his various moods of distress—when he is filled with nervous apprehensions, when faith seems gone, and Time to be

[a] "Ay" must have the force of the Greek ὤ "alas"—and "ay me" be as the Latin *hei mihi*, "woe is me!" See also P. xl., 6.

only "a maniac scattering dust," and Life to be "a Fury slinging flame:" when men also appear to be no more than flies, that sting and weave their cells and die. But above all,

> "Be near me when I fade away,
> To point the term of human strife,
> And on the low dark verge of life,
> The twilight of eternal day."

The idea is sustained, that we shall go through the darkness of death, when Time will be lost, into the dawning light of Eternity; and the Poet would have his friend be near him at this translation.

LI.

Dare we indeed challenge the dead to inspect us? Have we "no inner vileness" that we would not have them discover? Would the Poet be lessened in Hallam's esteem and affection, when "some hidden shame" was exposed? No,

"There must be wisdom with great Death:
The dead shall look me thro' and thro'."

. . . . . .

"They watch, like God, the rolling hours
With larger other eyes than ours,
To make allowance for us all."

LII.

He complains of his own inability to love Hallam as he ought, that is, worthily; because, if he did so, he would be equal to his friend,

"For love reflects the thing beloved;"

whereas his words are words only, the "froth of thought."

The Spirit of love reproves this self-accusation:

"Thou canst not move me from thy side,
Nor human frailty do me wrong."

There is no ideal of excellence, which we may conceive, that will ensure our attaining to it:

"not the sinless years
That breathed beneath the Syrian blue"—

not the life of Christ, in the clear atmosphere of Palestine, keeps any spirit "wholly true" to that pattern of perfection.

So be not "like an idle girl," fretting over little faults—"flecks of sin." But wait, thy wealth will be gathered in—thy worth shown

"When Time hath sunder'd shell from pearl"—

when the flesh has left the Soul free from its contaminating influence.

LIII.

He has often known a father, now

"A sober man among his boys,"

whose youth was noisy and foolish. Are we then to conclude from his example, that had there been no wild oats sown, there scarcely would have come

"The grain by which a man may live?"

If we ventured to name such a doctrine among the old, who have "outlived heats

of youth," would we preach it to the young, who still "eddy round and round?"

Hold fast what is good, and define it well; and take care that "divine Philosophy" does not exceed her legitimate bound and become

> "Procuress to the lords of hell"—

by advocating sin as the path to sanctity.

LIV.

This Poem expresses a hope in Universalism—

> "that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill"—

that natural propensities, wilful sins, imperfect faith, and inherited weakness, may all find a pardonable solution.

He hopes that nothing has been made in vain—

> "That not one life shall be destroy'd,
> Or cast as rubbish to the void,
> When God hath made the pile complete."

But how reverently does he touch this mysterious subject!

"Behold, we know not anything;
I can but trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream: but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light:
And with no language but a cry."

In Poem cxxiv., stanza 5, he says,

"Then was I as a child that cries,
But, crying, knows his father near."

LV.

He pursues the awful theme, and asks whether the wish for an universal restoration to life, does not spring from what is "likest God" in our own souls, His unlimited goodwill towards men, which would have all come to a knowledge of the truth?

"Are God and Nature then at strife?"

for we find Nature, whilst careful in preserving the type of each species, utterly

reckless of the separate members. We find, too, that out of "fifty (*myriad*)[a] seeds" sown, only one perhaps germinates. He falters and falls down

> "Upon the great world's altar-stairs,[b]
> That slope thro' darkness up to God;"—

but still he stretches forth "lame hands of faith"

> "To what I feel is Lord of all,
> And faintly trust the larger hope"—

the hope of a final restitution of all things.

LVI.

He said that Nature preserved each type; but no, some species are already extinct; and Nature says that she cares not for preserving anything, and so, in geological strata, we find the fossil remains of creatures that no longer exist.[c] Why then may not man,

[a] The early purple orchis is said to bear 200,000 seeds, and perhaps one grows to a plant.

[b] Coleridge says: "The Jacob's ladder of Truth let down from heaven to earth, with all its numerous rounds, is now the common highway on which we are content to toil upward."—*Friend*, viii.

[c] The doctrine of evolution may dispute this statement, and tell us that the type, or form, of the winged lizard of

"Who seemed so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,"

also perish, and have his dust blown about the desert,

"Or seal'd within the iron hills?"

If he be "no more"[a]—if there be nothing beyond this life for him—then is man but a monster, a dream, a discord—"dragons of the prime," the Ichthyosauri that lived in the slime of chaos, were his betters!

"O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless![b]
What hope of answer or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil."

LVII.

"Peace, come away," may possibly be addressed to his sister, whom he now calls away from the sad subject which his earthly song had treated.

chaos, now fossilized in the rock, has been developed and continued in the reptile of the ditch; but its living self has perished, and its type is gone.

[a] "To die,—to sleep,—no more."—Hamlet.

[b] "But O for the touch of a vanish'd hand,
And the sound of a voice that is still."

He says his companion's cheeks are pale, so it is time that they should turn to other things, though in doing so, he must leave half his own life behind. His "friend is richly shrined;" but what will become of himself? "I shall pass; my work will fail."

The author speaks of these poems—"methinks, I have built a rich shrine for my friend, but it will not last." At any rate, so long as he lives will the tolling of Hallam's passing bell[a] be in his ears; and the strokes on the bell, "Ave" and "Adieu," hail and farewell, are like the notes of perpetual separation. They seem to be parted "for evermore."[b] He is in the lowest depth of woe.[c]

[a] The term "toll" is correct—

"When we lament a departed soul
We toll."

[b] *Dixitque novissima verba*, Æ. iv., 650.

[c] A poem by Catullus (*Carmen* ci.) who visits his brother's grave, concludes with these lines:

"*Accipe fraterno multum manantia fletu,*
Atque in perpetuum, frater, Ave, atque Vale."

Ave is the morning greeting: *Vale* that of the evening. This seems the like idea to that of the morning and evening star. See P. cxxi., 5.

LVIII.

It has been thought that there might have been an interval after the composition of the previous Poem; and that the author resumed his task in a more hopeful state of mind.

He now compares the words of his late farewell to the echoes of dropping water in burial vaults, and he says that other hearts besides his own were affected by his lamentation.

Urania reproaches him for thus distributing a fruitless grief amongst those who had shared his sense of loss; and, exhorting him to wait with patience for a more resigned feeling, she assures him that it will come to his great relief—

> "Abide a little longer here,
> And thou shalt take a nobler leave"—

be able to speak with more confidence of their meeting again.

LIX.

He invites Sorrow to live with him as a wife, always and constant, not as a casual mistress: being his "bosom-friend and half of life," even as it were Hallam himself.

Sorrow must remain his centred passion which cannot move; nevertheless it will not always be gloomy: but rather allow occasional playfulness, so that it would not be commonly known that he had a life-long affliction.[a]

LX.

He cannot dismiss the memory of his loss, and calls Hallam "a soul of nobler tone," superior to himself, who is feeling "like some poor girl" that has fixed her affections on a man of higher rank than her own. She compares her state with

[a] There is often great charm in the cheerfulness of those who we know have suffered.

his, and sighs over her own inferior circumstances, and repines at her humbler lot. The neighbours jeer at her disappointment, and she says

"How vain am I!
How should he love a thing so low?"

No doubt, the passing into a higher world gave Hallam a superior dignity in the Poet's estimation.[a]

LXI.

If Hallam, in the intermediate state be exchanging replies with the great intellects there assembled from all time,—"the spirits of just men made perfect"—how dwarfed and insignificant must seem any intercourse with his friend still left here—

"How blanch'd with darkness must I grow!"

This figure of speech will be taken from the blanching of vegetables in the dark. Still, he would have him turn to

[a] See the Poet's own words on this point at the end of Poem XCVII.

"the doubtful shore,[a]
Where thy first form was made a man;"

that is, to this world, distinguishing it from that "second state sublime," into which Hallam had been admitted; for not even there can more affection be found, than I conceived and yet cherish:

"I loved thee, Spirit, and love, nor can
The soul of Shakespeare love thee more."

This is all that even Shakespeare can do, if he and thou be now compeers.

LXII.

If looking down on the object of his affection makes his friend ashamed, then let their friendship be to him but as an idle tale or legend of the past. And Hallam may feel as one might, who having once

[a] "Doubtful shore" may mean that here there may be doubt, whether there has not been a previous existence.

had a low attachment, did afterwards wed an equal mind.[a]

The first love then either wholly dies out, or

"Is matter for a flying smile"—

a subject for ridicule.

LXIII.

Still, if I can pity an overdriven horse, or love my dog, without robbing heaven of its dues of reverence, when these animals are as much below me as I am thy inferior; why mayest not thou "watch me, where I weep," from thy circuits of higher heights and deeper depths than mine?

LXIV.

He asks whether Hallam is looking back on this life,

"As some divinely gifted man,"

[a] "Thou, as one that once declined," recalls in Hamlet, Act I., s. 5, "To decline upon a wretch, whose natural gifts were poor to those of mine."

who has burst through all the adverse circumstances of his humble birth, by genius and labour; making

> "by force his merit known,
> And lives to clutch the golden keys,
> To mould a mighty state's decrees,
> And shape the whisper of the throne;"

as Lord Beaconsfield did.

Does not such a hero in his elevation,

> "When all his active powers are still,"

sometimes feel tender memories of the scenes of his early life—

> "The limit of his narrower fate"—

when he "play'd at counsellors and kings" with some lad long ago left behind in his native obscurity; and who now resting on his plough, musingly asks,

> "Does my old friend remember me?"

LXV.

He clings to the memory of Hallam, yet would resign himself to his loss—

> "Sweet soul, do with me as thou wilt."

All that he can resolve is, to cherish every grain of love; and in doing so, there springs up the "happy thought," that if his own nature has been elevated by intercourse with Hallam, why may not a like result have been reflected from himself on his friend?

"Since we deserved the name of friends,
And thine effect so lives in me,
A part of mine may live in thee,
And move thee on to noble ends."

LXVI.

He accounts for his cheerfulness to some one, who had wondered that being so far diseased in heart he could ever be gay.

He says that his own grief has made him feel kindly towards others; and that he is like a blind man, who though needing a hand to lead him, can still jest with his friends, take children on his knee and play with them, and dream of the sky he can no longer see:

"His inner day can never die,
His night of loss is always there."

LXVII.

He pictures in his mind, as he lies in bed, how the moonlight that fills his chamber is passing its "silver flame" across the marble tablet in Clevedon Church,[a] which is inscribed to the memory of Hallam. The tablet is not in the chancel of the church, as erroneously stated in Mr. Hallam's private memoir of his son, and consequently so described in the earlier editions of this Poem, but it rests on the west wall of the south transept, and "the letters of thy name," and "the number of thy years," are thus most affectingly recorded:

[a] Clevedon Church, which is dedicated to St. Andrew, is quaint and picturesque in appearance, but not architecturally beautiful. It is an irregular structure, which has evidently been added to at various times, the chancel being the original fisherman's church, and it has a solid square tower. Within the sanctuary is the Hallam vault, on which the organ now stands. Two cliffs, known as Church Hill and Wains Hill, rounded and grass-grown, that rise on either side, seem to guard and shelter it, with its surrounding churchyard that holds the quiet dead. There are only two bells in Clevedon Church—a small one, on which are three initial letters L. A. C., and a larger one, weighing 25 cwt. which is inscribed—

"I to the church the living call,
And to the grave do summon all."—1725.

"TO THE MEMORY OF
ARTHUR HENRY HALLAM,
OF TRINITY COLLEGE, CAMBRIDGE, B.A.,
ELDEST SON OF HENRY HALLAM, ESQUIRE,
AND OF JULIA MARIA, HIS WIFE,
DAUGHTER OF SIR ABRAHAM ELTON, BART.,
OF CLEVEDON COURT,
WHO WAS SNATCHED AWAY BY SUDDEN DEATH,
AT VIENNA, ON SEPTEMBER 15TH, 1833,
IN THE 23RD YEAR OF HIS AGE.
AND NOW, IN THIS OBSCURE AND SOLITARY CHURCH,
REPOSE THE MORTAL REMAINS OF
ONE TOO EARLY LOST FOR PUBLIC FAME,
BUT ALREADY CONSPICUOUS AMONG HIS CONTEMPORARIES
FOR THE BRIGHTNESS OF HIS GENIUS,
THE DEPTH OF HIS UNDERSTANDING,
THE NOBLENESS OF HIS DISPOSITION,
THE FERVOUR OF HIS PIETY,
AND THE PURITY OF HIS LIFE.

Vale dulcissime,
vale dilectissime, desideratissime,
requiescas in pace.
Pater ac mater hic posthac requiescamus tecum,
usque ad tubam."[a]

[a] There are other tablets in this church, which contain touching memorials of the Hallam family. The historian's own death is recorded as having taken place on 21st January, 1859. Mrs. Hallam died 28th April, 1840. Their son

When the moonlight dies he falls asleep, "closing eaves of wearied eyes;" and awakens to know how the grey break of day is drawn from "coast to coast," from Somersetshire to Wales, across the estuary of the Severn,[a]

> "And in the dark church like a ghost
> Thy tablet glimmers to the dawn."

LXVIII.

A succession of dreams now occurs. When at night he presses "the down" of his pillow, sleep, "Death's twin-brother,"[b] "times my breath"—takes possession of

Henry Fitzmaurice died at Sienna. 25th October, 1850, aged 26; and he is said, by one who knew him, to have had all the charm and talent of Arthur. On 13th June, 1837, in her 21st year, Eleanor Hallam was suddenly called away, and was buried in the vault where her brother, Arthur, had been laid.

It was after this sad bereavement, that Mr. and Mrs. Hallam made a brief sojourn at Sevenoaks, then unspotted by villas, where they lived in strict retirement. Mr. Hallam only associated with Sir John Bayley, the retired judge, who was a kind friend of my own youth. I see the sorrowing couple at church in garments of the deepest mourning; and the fine brow of Mr. Hallam resting on his hand, as he stood during the service in pensive devotion.—A. G.

[a] The Severn is nine miles wide at Clevedon.

[b] *Consanguineus leti sopor.* Æn. vi. 278. See also Iliad xiv., 231, and xvi., 672.

him and regulates his breathing. But, though so closely related to Death, sleep cannot make him dream of Hallam "as dead." He again walks with him, as he did before he was left "forlorn;" and all nature is bright around them.

But, looking at his friend, he discovers "a trouble in thine eye"—an expression of sadness, which his dream will not account for. The light of day reveals the truth. He awakes, and perceives that his own grief, the trouble of his youth, had transferred itself to the image he saw in his dream.

LXIX.

He dreams again, and nature seems to have become distorted, and will not answer to the seasons. Smoke and frost fill the streets, and hawkers chatter trifles at the doors.

He wanders into a wood, and finds only

"thorny boughs." Of these he forms a crown, which he places on his head. For wearing this, he is scoffed at and derided; but an angel comes and touches it into leaf, and speaks words of comfort, "hard to understand," being the language of a higher world.

The occurrences in this dream seem to have been suggested by the indignities offered to our Lord before His crucifixion.

LXX.

The confusion of nightmare, with hideous imagery, follows his effort to discern the features of Hallam; till all at once the horrid shapes disperse, and his nerves are composed by a pleasanter vision:

> "I hear a wizard music roll,
> And thro' a lattice on the soul
> Looks thy fair face and makes it still."

LXXI.

Sleep, from its capturing power over the

brain, is called "kinsman to death and trance and madness;" and is here acknowledged as affording

"A night-long Present of the Past,"

by reviving in a dream of the night a tour they had made together "thro' summer France."

The Poet asks that, if sleep has "such credit with the soul," as to produce this temporary illusion; it may be farther extended by giving him a stronger opiate, so as to make his pleasure complete, in prolonging this renewal of their pedestrian tour, and reviving other cherished associations.

This reference to their foreign excursion recalls the charming verses, "In the Valley of Cauteretz," which evidently relate to their being together during this happy holiday:

"All along the valley, stream that flashest white,
Deepening thy voice with the deepening of the night,

All along the valley, where thy waters flow,
I walk'd with one I loved two-and-thirty years ago.
All along the valley, while I walk'd to-day,
The two-and-thirty years were a mist that rolls away;
For all along the valley, down thy rocky bed,
Thy living voice to me was as the voice of the dead,
And all along the valley, by rock and cave and tree,
The voice of the dead was a living voice to me."

LXXII.

The dreams are over, and he addresses the sad anniversary of Hallam's death, which took place on the 15th of September, 1833—the day having just dawned with stormy accompaniments. The poplar tree[a] is blown white, through having its leaves reversed by the wind; and the window-pane streams with rain. It is a day on which his "crown'd estate," his

[a] In Tennyson's "Ode to Memory" the lines occur

"The seven elms, the poplars four,
That stand beside my father's door."

life's happiness, began to fail; and that the rose is weighed down by rain, and the daisy closes her "crimson fringes,"[a] are effects quite in harmony with his feelings.

But, if the day had opened with no wind, and the sun had chequered the hill sides with light and shadow; it would still have looked

"As wan, as chill, as wild as now."

It is a disastrous "day, mark'd as with some hideous crime," he can therefore only say, "hide thy shame beneath the ground," in sunset, when the recalling anniversary will be past.

We are reminded of Job's imprecation on his own birthday—"Let the day perish on which I was born."

LXXIII.

He says there are so many worlds, and so much to be done in them—since so

[a] The foot of "Maud" opened these fringes by treading on the daisies. "Her feet have touched the meadows, and left the daisies rosy."

little has already been accomplished—that he thinks Hallam may have been needed elsewhere. The earthly career of usefulness and distinction is over; but he finds no fault, piously submitting—

> "For nothing is that errs from law;"

all is overruled. We pass away, and what survives of human deeds?

> "It rests with God."

The hollow ghost of Hallam's reputation may wholly fade here; but his exulting soul carries away unexpended powers for higher purposes,

> "And self-infolds the large results
> Of force that would have forged a name,"

had he been permitted to live.

LXXIV.

This Poem will certainly not bear a literal interpretation. We cannot suppose

that the writer ever looked on the face of his friend after death; for nearly four months had elapsed before the body reached England.

What he saw, therefore, was with "the mind's eye." And as Death often brings out a likeness,[a] which was never before recognized; so, contemplating the character of the departed, he sees

> "Thy likeness to the wise below,
> Thy kindred with the great of old."

I can perceive worth in thee equal to theirs!

The last stanza is mystical; the darkness of death hides much; what he can see he cannot or will not explain: enough, that thou hast made even this darkness of death beautiful by thy presence.

LXXV.

The Poet leaves the praises of his friend

[a] Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Letter to a Friend," says, with reference to some one recently dead, that "he lost his own face, and looked like one of his near relations: for he maintained not his proper countenance, but looked like his uncle."

unexpressed, because no words can duly convey them; and the greatness thus unrecorded must be guessed, by the measure of the survivor's grief.

Indeed, he does not care

> " in these fading days
> To raise a cry that lasts not long,
> And round thee with the breeze of song,
> To stir a little dust [a] of praise."

The world only applauds accomplished success, and does not care for what might have been done, had opportunity been given. It is therefore sufficient that silence should guard Hallam's

[a] In "The Two Voices," Tennyson says,

> "I know that age to age succeeds,
> Blowing a noise of tongues and deeds,
> A *dust* of systems and of creeds."

And again, in "The Vision of Sin,"

> "All the windy ways of men
> Are but *dust* that rises up,
> And is lightly laid again."

Also in Poem LXXI., 3.

> "the *dust* of change."

fame here; because the writer is assured, that what he is elsewhere doing

"Is wrought with tumult of acclaim."

One cannot but feel that were it not for this immortal elegy, its subject would have been long since forgotten, like other promising youths who have died in their Spring.

LXXVI.

"Take wings of fancy," and imagine that you have the whole "starry heavens of space" revealed to one glance—"sharpen'd to a needle's end."[a]

"Take wings of foresight," and see in the future how thy best poems are dumb, before a yew tree moulders; and though

[a] Shakespeare says,—"Till the diminution of space had pointed him sharp as my needle."—*Cymbeline*, Act i., s. 4.
Chaucer says,

"And all the world as to mine eye
No more seemed than a prike."
Temple of Fame.

the writings of *the great early Poets*—"the matin songs that woke the darkness of our planet"—may last, thy songs in fifty years will have become vain; and have ceased to be known by the time when the oak tree has withered into a hollow ruin.[a]

LXXVII.

"What hope is here for modern rhyme?"

Looking at what has already happened,

"These mortal lullabies of pain,"

may bind a book, or line a box, or be used by some girl for curl papers; or before a century has passed, they may be found on a stall, telling of

"A grief—then changed to something else,
Sung by a long forgotten mind."

[a] "The Poet Laureate has written his own song on the hearts of his countrymen that can never die. Time is powerless against him," said Mr. Gladstone, in returning thanks at Kirkwall for himself and Mr. Tennyson. To both of whom the freedom of the borough was presented, on the occasion of their visit—13 Sept., 1883.

Nevertheless, these considerations shall not deter the Poet—

> "But what of that? My darken'd ways
> Shall ring with music all the same;
> To breathe my loss is more than fame,
> To utter love more sweet than praise."

LXXVIII.

Another Christmas Eve arrives, with snow and calm frosty weather. Though, as of old, they had games, and *tableaux vivants*, and dance, and song, and "hoodman blind"[a]—blindman's bluff—yet in spite of these recreations,

> "over all things brooding slept
> The quiet sense of something lost."

There were no visible signs of distress—no tears or outward mourning. Could regret then have died out?

[a] This term is Shakespearean,

> "What devil was't
> That thus hath cozen'd you at hoodman-blind."
> *Hamlet*, Act iii., s. 4.

"No—mixt with all this mystic frame,
Her deep relations are the same,
But with long use her tears are dry."

LXXIX.

"More than my brothers are to me"—

he had used this expression in the last stanza of Poem ix., and in repeating it he would apologize to his brother Charles Tennyson, we may presume.

"Let not this vex thee, noble heart!"

for thou art holding "the costliest love in fee," even a wife's affection—we may again suppose.

The Rev. Charles Tennyson married Miss Sellwood,[a] and changed his name to Turner, for property left to him by a relation, and was vicar of Grasby, in Lincolnshire. The brothers,[b] in their boyhood, shared one home with all its endearing associations; and now each has his special

[a] A younger sister of Lady Tennyson.
[b] Their scholarly father gave them their first classical training. He was a strict tutor, and would make them repeat some odes of Horace before breakfast.

object of affection: "my wealth resembles thine;" except that Hallam

> "was rich where I was poor,
> And he supplied my want the more
> As his unlikeness fitted mine."

LXXX.

If any vague wish visits the Poet, that he had himself been the first to be removed by Death (when the dust would have dropt on "tearless eyes," which, as it is, have now so sorely wept over Hallam's departure); then the grief of the survivor would have been

> "as deep as life or thought,
> But stay'd in peace with God and man;"

because Hallam would have found comfort in pious resignation.

So he minutely ponders over this holy submission, and invokes contentment from the contemplation—

> "Unused example from the grave
> Reach out dead hands to comfort me."

LXXXI.

If, whilst Hallam was with him, it could be said that love had its full complement and satisfaction, and could not range beyond; still he torments himself with "this haunting whisper,"

> "More years had made me love thee more."

My attachment would have expanded with the enlargement of his powers.

> "But Death returns an answer sweet:
> My sudden frost was sudden gain"—

The change in death instantly exalted its victim;

> "And gave all ripeness to the grain,
> It might have drawn from after-heat."

A sudden frost will ripen grain or fruit, but will not impart the flavour to fruit which the sun gives.

In Hallam's sudden transition, what

might have been drawn from subsequent experience was at once fully accomplished.

LXXXII.

A fine burst of Faith in the future. He does not reproach Death for any corruption by it "on form or face." No decay of the flesh can shake his trust in the survival of the soul. "Eternal process" is ever "moving on;" the Spirit walks through a succession of states of being; and the body dropt here is but a case, the "ruin'd chrysalis of one" state left behind.[a]

Nor does he find fault with Death for taking "virtue out of earth:" he knows that it will be transplanted elsewhere to greater profit.

What he is angry with Death for is, their separation—

[a] In "The Two Voices," we find the idea that man may pass "from state to state," and forget the one he leaves behind:

> "As old mythologies relate,
> Some draught of Lethe might await
> The slipping thro' from state to state."

"He put our lives so far apart
We cannot hear each other speak."

This Poem expresses a comforting belief in progress and advancement hereafter.

LXXXIII.

"The northern shore" must simply mean our northern region.

He reproaches the New Year for "delaying long." Its advent would cheer him, bringing the light and sweetness of Spring —for

"Can trouble live with April days,
Or sadness in the summer moons?"

He would have the New Year bring all its customary flowers—

"Deep tulips dash'd with fiery dew,
Laburnums, dropping-wells of fire"—

a sight of these would set free the sorrow in his blood,

"And flood a fresher throat with song."

LXXXIV.

This Poem is a very charming concep-

tion of what their lives might have domestically been, if Hallam had been spared. The picture is almost too beautiful: detailing more than life ever allows—and there came the crushing sorrow.

Engaged in marriage to the Poet's sister,[a] death intervened—

> "that remorseless iron hour
> Made cypress of her orange flower,
> Despair of Hope, and earth of thee."

It is remarkable how the imagination of the Poet glows over the tender scenes of home affection, and the great results which he presumes were arrested by the removal of his friend, who he had hoped would have attained "to reverence and the silver hair" in company with himself—and then, in their full old age,

> "He that died in Holy Land
> Would reach us out the shining hand,
> And take us as a single soul."

[a] Miss Emily Tennyson eventually married a naval officer, Captain Jesse.

The mere thought of this forbidden consummation of their friendship shocks him; it revives the old bitterness of sorrow, and stops

"The low beginnings of content."[a]

LXXXV.

The first stanza merely repeats the sentiment expressed in Poem xxvii., that the deepest grief has only more fully convinced him, that to have loved and lost is better than never to have loved.

It is *the friend to whom the epithalamium*

[a] In this Poem occurs the line

"Arrive at last the blessed goal."

"Arrive" is thus made an active verb: but there are good authorities for this use, which has the meaning of "attain," or "reach."

"But ere we could arrive the point proposed,
Cæsar cried, Help me, Cassius, or I sink."
Julius Cæsar, Act i., s. 2.

"I mean, my lords, those powers that the queen
Hath raised in Gallia have arrived our coast."
3 *Henry VI.*, Act v., s. 3.

"Over the vast abrupt, ere he arrive
The happy isle."
Paradise Lost, B. II., l. 409.

is addressed—E. L. Lushington—"true in word and tried in deed," who asks how he is affected—if his faith be still firm, and he has still room in his heart for love? He answers, that all was well with him, until that fatal "message" came, that

> "God's finger touch'd him, and he slept."

He then recounts what he thinks may have occurred to Hallam, when translated through various stages of spiritual being; and he repeats his sorrowful regrets for his loss. But "I woo your love," he seems to say to his future brother-in-law, for he holds it wrong

> "to mourn for any over much:"

still, so deep is his attachment to Hallam, that he calls himself

> "the divided half of such
> A friendship as had master'd Time;"

their intimacy would be eternal; and he imagines some sort of intercourse still carried on betwixt them, which he describes

in language that has much of the spirit and character of Dante.

He then seems to turn again to his living friend, and says,

> "If not so fresh, with love as true,
> I, clasping brother-hands, aver
> I could not, if I would, transfer
> The whole I felt for him to you."

But he is not wholly disconsolate—

> "My heart, tho' widow'd, may not rest
> Quite in the love of what is gone,[a]
> But seeks to beat in time with one
> That warms another living breast."

The concluding stanza offers the primrose of autumn to the surviving friend, whilst that of spring must be reserved for the friend whom he has lost.

LXXXVI.

He asks the ambrosial air of evening,

[a] This Poem was written "through a course of years," and during that long period the author was devotedly attached to the lady whom he ultimately married, but they were not allowed to meet. May not this separation have tinctured, with double sadness, this wonderful elegy in memory of his friend? Lord Tennyson's marriage, and the first publication of "In Memoriam," both occurred in 1850.

which is so "sweet after showers," and is "slowly breathing bare the round of space,"[a] clearing the sky of clouds, and "shadowing" the divided stream by raising ripples on its surface, to fan the fever from his cheek, till Doubt and Death can no longer enchain his fancy, but will let it fly to the rising star, in which

"A hundred spirits whisper, 'Peace.'"

This Poem is remarkable as being one sustained sentence.

LXXXVII.

He revisits Cambridge, the chief scene of past intimacy with Hallam, and roams about the different colleges.

The expression "high-built organ," probably alludes to the organ being here, as in some cathedrals, reared above the screen which separates the choir from the nave.

"The prophets blazon'd on the panes,"

[a] "all things rare
That heaven's air in this huge rondure hems."
SHAKESPEARE, *Sonnet XXI.*

refers to the stained glass windows, and more particularly to those, perhaps, in King's College chapel. The scenery at the back of the colleges is vividly recalled.

He stops at the door of Hallam's old room, now occupied by a noisy wine party. It was there that his friend used to achieve such controversial triumphs—ever as the master-bowman hitting the mark in argument, when

> "we saw
> The God within him light his face,"

like the martyr Stephen's;

> "And over those ethereal eyes
> The bar of Michael Angelo"—

whose brow was straight and prominent—the sign of intellectual power.

Michael Angelo had a strong bar of bone over his eyes.

Mrs. Frances A. Kemble in *Record of a Girlhood*, vol. ii. p. 3, thus describes young Hallam's appearance. "There was a gentleness and purity almost virginal in his voice, manner, and countenance; and the upper part of his face, his forehead and eyes (perhaps in readiness for his early translation), wore the angelic radiance that they still must

wear in heaven. Some time or other, at some rare moments of the divine Spirit's supremacy in our souls, we all put on the heavenly face that will be ours hereafter, and for a brief lightning space our friends behold us as we shall look when this mortal has put on immortality. On Arthur Hallam's brow and eyes this heavenly light, so fugitive on other human faces, rested habitually, as if he was thinking and seeing in heaven."

LXXXVIII.

He asks the "wild bird," probably the nightingale, whose liquid song brings a sense of Eden back again, to define the feelings of the heart, its emotions and passions. In the "budded quicks" of Spring the bird is happy; in the "darkening leaf," amid the shadowing foliage, though its happiness be gone, its grieving heart can still cherish "a secret joy." The notes of the nightingale are supposed to be both sorrowful and joyous.

Even so, the Poet cannot wholly govern his own muse; for, when he would sing of woe,

> "The glory of the sum of things,"

the grandeur of life's experience, will sometimes rule the chords.

LXXXIX.

This Poem is like a picture by Watteau of a summer holiday in the garden or the woods.

He recalls the lawn of Somersby Rectory, with the trees[a] that shade it, and Hallam as being present on one of his repeated visits. He has come down from his law readings in the Temple,

"The dust and din and steam of town;"

and now, in a golden afternoon, sees

"The landscape winking thro' the heat"

as he lies and reads Dante, or Tasso, aloud to his companions; until later on, when some lady of the group would bring her harp, and fling

"A ballad to the brightening moon."

Or the family party may have strayed

[a] The "towering sycamore" must be a notable tree on the lawn, again alluded to in P. XCV., s. 14. *It is cut down, and the four poplars are gone, and the lawn is no longer a flat one.*

farther away, for a picnic in the woods; and are there discussing the respective merits of town and country.

They are described as returning home,

> "Before the crimson-circled star[a]
> Had fall'n into her father's grave,"

that is, before the planet Venus had sunk into the sea—"her father's grave."—*This planet is evolved from the Sun—La Place's theory.*

The evening sounds are very charming—

> "The milk that bubbled in the pail,
> And buzzings of the honied hours,"

when the bees were gathering their last stores of the day. Tender recollections of the past!

XC.

He is indignant at the idea that if the dead came back to life again, they would not be welcome; and declares that who-

[a] "In summer twilight she, as evening star, is seen surrounded with the glow of sunset, *crimson-circled.*"
SPEDDING'S *Bacon*, vol. vi., p. 615.

ever suggested this, could never have tasted the highest love.

Nevertheless, if the father did return to life, he would probably find his wife re-married, and his son unwilling to give up the estate. Even if matters were not so bad as this, still

> "the yet-loved sire would make
> Confusion worse than death, and shake
> The pillars of domestic peace."[a]

Though all this may be true,

> "I find not yet one lonely thought
> That cries against my wish for thee."

XCI.

When the larch is in flower, and the thrush "rarely pipes"—exquisitely sings; and "the sea-blue bird of March,"[b] the

[a] In the "Lotus Eaters," we read

> "all hath suffered change;
> For surely now our household hearths are cold:
> Our sons inherit us: our looks are strange:
> And we should come like ghosts to trouble joy."

[b] The kingfisher is here meant, which, like other birds, puts on its best plumage in early spring—see "Locksley Hall"—

> "In the spring a fuller crimson comes upon the robin's breast;

kingfisher, "flits by;" come, my friend, in thy spirit form, with thy brow wearing the tokens of what thou hast become. Come to me also in the summer-time, when roses bloom and the wheat ripples in the wind. Don't come at night, but whilst the sunbeam is warm, that I may see thee,

> "beauteous in thine after form,
> And like a finer light in light."

XCII.

If a vision revealed Hallam in bodily presence as of old, he would doubt its reality, and ascribe it to "the canker of the

In the spring the wanton lapwing gets himself another crest;
In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnish'd dove.'

Longfellow sings in "It is not always May:"

> "The sun is bright—the air is clear,
> The darting swallows soar and sing,
> And from the stately elms I hear
> The blue-bird prophesying spring."

I can positively say that the kingfisher is the bird to which the poet refers. Another parallel passage may be quoted:

> "The fields made golden with the flower of March,
> The throstle singing in the feather'd larch,
> And down the river, like a flame of blue,
> Keen as an arrow flies the water-king."
>
> 'The little halcyon's azure plume
> Was never half so blue."—SHENSTONE.

brain." If the apparition spoke of the past, he would still call it only "a wind of memory" in himself. Even if it promised what afterwards came true, he would account it to be merely a presentiment—

> "such refraction of events
> As often rises ere they rise."[a]

XCIII.

"I shall not see thee;" for he doubts, though he dares not positively speak, whether a spirit does ever return to this world—at least visibly—so as to be recognised. But he will dare to ask that where "the nerve of sense" is not concerned—that is, where neither sight nor touch are needed—wholly apart from the body—

[a] Campbell says, "Coming events cast their shadows before." The sun, by refraction, still appears in full size above the horizon, after it has really sunk below it; and reappears in full, when only just the upper edge has reached the horizon.

> "As the sun,
> Ere it is risen, sometimes paints its image
> In the atmosphere, so often do the spirits
> Of great events stride on before the events,
> And in to-day already walks to-morrow."
> *Death of Wallenstein*, Act v. Scene i.

"Spirit to Spirit, Ghost to Ghost" may come, so that

> "My Ghost may feel that thine is near."[a]

XCIV.

To be fit and capable of a spiritual visitation from the dead, you must be "pure in heart, and sound in head." There will be no answer to your invocation, unless you can say that your "spirit is at peace with all," as they can who are already in "their golden day" in Paradise. The mind and memory and conscience must be calm and still; for

> "when the heart is full of din,
> And doubt beside the portal waits,"

the departed spirits

> "can but listen at the gates,
> And hear the household jar within."

This fitness for apprehending any communications from the next world, well describes

[a] The wish realized. See Poem XCV. s. 9.

the condition requisite for intercourse with God Himself.

XCV.

Here comes another family scene at Somersby.[a]

It may be observed here that Dr. Tennyson, the Poet's father, had died in 1831, but his family remained in their old home for several years afterwards, as the new Incumbent was non-resident.

The family party are at tea on the lawn in the calm summer evening. No wind makes the tapers flare, no cricket chirrs,

[a] Somersby may be described as being utterly secluded from the "madding crowd"—the most rural retirement that the most agricultural country can show. I find the population was recorded in 1835, when the family still resided there, as being sixty-one, whilst the church accommodation was for sixty. Small, however, as both church and parish were, and still are, the so-called Rectory is a roomy family house, with its back to the road, on which there can be but little traffic, and it fronts a very extensive stretch of country, on which you enter by a steep slope of ground. There are no striking features in this expanse of soft undulations, but you feel a consciousness that the sea is not far off, and that the scenery is well adapted for fine cloud and sunset effects. The air seems to have a bracing tone, and the several equally small churches around, tell of thin populations, and a general condition of rustic simplicity and peace.

only the running brook is heard at a distance, whilst the urn flutters on the table. The bats performed their circular flight;

> "And wheel'd or lit the filmy shapes
> That haunt the dusk, with ermine capes
> And woolly breasts and beaded eyes"—

these are *night moths* (*Arctica menthrasti*, the ermine moth, answers the description), whilst those assembled sing old songs, which are heard as far as where the cows are lying under the branching trees.

So passed the evening until all have retired to rest, and the Poet is alone, when he takes out Hallam's last-written letters—

> "those fall'n leaves which kept their green,
> The noble letters of the dead."[a]

[a] "They told me, Heraclitus, they told me you were dead:
They brought me bitter news to hear, and bitter tears to shed;
I wept, as I remember'd how often you and I
Had tired the sun with talking, and sent him down the sky.

"And now that thou are lying, my dear old Carian guest,
A handful of grey ashes, long long ago at rest,
Still are thy pleasant voices, thy nightingales, awake,
For death he taketh all away, but them he cannot take."

I cannot resist quoting these touching lines, which are translated from the Greek of Callimachus, librarian of Alexandria, 260 B.C., on his friend Heraclitus of Halicarnassus.

He reads them afresh, to renew a sense of their bygone intimacy:

"So word by word, and line by line,
The dead man touch'd me from the past,
And all at once it seem'd at last
The living soul was flash'd on mine."

The Poet's mind struggles on "empyreal heights of thought" in incorporeal ecstasy—a sort of trance inexplicable—which lasts till dawn, when

"East and West, without a breath,
Mixt their dim lights, like life and death,
To broaden into boundless day."

XCVI.

He reproves the young lady, who, whilst tender over killing a fly, does not hesitate to call the harass of religious doubt "Devil-born."

The Poet says, "one indeed I knew"—who, it may be presumed, was Hallam—and

"He faced the spectres of the mind
And laid them."
"Perplext in faith, but pure in deeds,[a]
At last he beat his music out,"

and found the serenity of faith.

"There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds."

Unquestioning faith is not the qualification for its champion. True faith is the result of conflict—"the victory that overcometh the world."

God made and lives in both light and darkness; and is present in the trouble of doubt, as well as in the comfort of belief. The Israelites were making idols when God's presence in the cloud was manifested by the trumpet. They doubted in the midst of sensible proof of the Divine presence.

The questionings of a speculative mind ought to be tenderly dealt with, not harshly denounced.

[a] See P. cix., s. 3.

XCVII.

This Poem is highly mystical.

"My love has talk'd with rocks and trees."

His own affection for Hallam seems to personate the object of his attachment, and "sees himself in all he sees." Just as the giant spectre, sometimes seen "on misty mountain-ground,"[a] is no more than the vast shadow of the spectator himself.

The Poem proceeds more intelligibly, by drawing a comparison which typifies his own humble relation to his exalted friend. He imagines some meek-hearted and affectionate wife loving and revering a husband, whose high intellect and pursuits exclude her from any real companionship.

But she treasures any little memorials of their early devotion, and feeling that he is

"great and wise,
She dwells on him with faithful eyes,
'I cannot understand: I love.'"

[a] "Jocund day
Stands tiptoe on the misty mountain-tops."
Romeo and Juliet, Act iii., s. 5.

It must be understood that this Poem, as elsewhere, would describe *the relation of one on earth to one in the other and higher world—not the Author's relation to him here. He certainly looked up to the Author, fully as much as the Author to him.*

XCVIII.

"You leave us." Some one is going on the very route which the friends had traversed together, and will reach "that City," Vienna, where Hallam died. All its splendour is to the Poet,

> "No livelier than the wisp[a] that gleams
> On Lethe in the eyes of death;"

so great is his aversion to the place, on account of the loss he had sustained there; and he charges it with all manner of ill.

But Hallam had given him a very different description; saying that in no other metropolis—"mother town"—had he seen such stately carriages of the rich pass to

[a] *Ignis fatuus*—"Will o' the Wisp."

and fro; and such a contented crowd enjoying themselves with dance and song, amidst a display of coloured fireworks.

XCIX.

This Poem is an address to the recurring anniversary of Hallam's death, which had before been commemorated in Poem lxxii.—

"Day, when I lost the flower of men."

The early signs of Autumn are very sweetly described, in personifying a day that will remind many of births and bridals, but still more of deaths; and wherever the sorrowing survivors may reside, they are on this day "kindred souls" with himself—though they be utter strangers—

"They know me not, but mourn with me."

This applies to all

"Betwixt the slumber of the poles,"—

from one end of the world to the other.

The poles of the earth are the ends of the axis on which the world revolves. These never move, but "slumber."

Autumn laying "a fiery finger on the leaves," is an expression similar to

"This maple burn itself away."—P. ci., 1.

"And the flying gold of the ruin'd woodlands drove thro' the air."—"Maud," stanza 3.

C.

Rising from his night's rest shortly before quitting the old home, and looking over the familiar landscape, which his friend had known so well; there is not a feature but recalls some gracious memory of Hallam's presence.

The various objects in the surrounding country are enumerated, and present a beautiful rural picture to the mind; and he says,

"But each has pleased a kindred eye,
And each reflects a kindlier day;
And, leaving these, to pass away,
I think once more he seems to die."

To take leave of them is to renew the more bitter separation.

In recent editions this poem commences "I climb the hill," instead of "I wake, I rise."

CI.

A sad reflection comes over him at the thought of bidding farewell to Somersby.

Unwatched and unloved will the flowers in the garden bloom with their fragrance, although the family be gone: and the trees will put forth, and afterwards shed their foliage. The rose-carnation, too, will

> "feed
> With summer-spice the humming air,"

in which the bees are busy.

Uncared for, the brook will babble

> "At noon, or when the lesser wain[a]
> Is twisting round the polar star;"—

also when the sailing moon's reflection in

[a] That is, the *ursa minor*, or little bear, which is a small constellation that contains the pole star, and never sets in our latitude.

the water becomes broken into silver arrows.[a]

All this will go on, until garden and wild become familiar to the succeeding stranger:

> "And year by year our memory fades
> From all the circle of the hills."

Future generations will nevertheless visit Somersby, with something of the reverence that still attracts the stranger to Stratford-on-Avon.

CII.

> "We leave the well-beloved place
> Where first we gazed upon the sky."

The mother, and the members of her family, quit what had been the Rectory, and seek a new home.

But, "ere we go," the Poet walks in the garden, and seems to be in the company of two spirits, who

[a] This is a favourite figure. In Poem xlix., stanza 1, we read,

> "Like light in many a shiver'd lance
> That breaks about the dappled pools."

"Contend for loving masterdom."

They do not represent persons, but the place with different associations. *The first is the love of the native place; the second, the same love enhanced by the memory of the friend.*

The former pleads

"here thy boyhood sung
Long since its matin song."

The rival affection urges

"Yea, but here
Thy feet have stray'd in after hours
With thy lost friend among the bowers,
And this hath made them trebly dear."

Through half the day each one prefers a separate appeal by endearing circumstance; but the contest affords no superiority to either; and, as the Poet turns away from the illusion,

"They mix in one another's arms
To one pure image of regret."

This picture is very beautiful.

CIII.

A dream is described,

"Which left my after-morn content;"

it imparted comfort.

The Poet seemed to be in a hall, where maidens were singing before a veiled statue—

"known to me,
The shape of him I loved."

A dove flies in and summons him to the sea, where, together with his female companions, he enters a boat. As the boat glides away with them, they all seem to expand into greater size and strength; and a vast ship meets them, on the deck of which, in giant proportions, stands "the man we loved."

The maidens weep, as they fear being left behind; but all enter the ship, and

"We steer'd her toward a crimson cloud
That land-like slept along the deep."

The teaching is allegorical of the voyage, and of those on board, and we may take this interpretation: *I rather believe the maidens are the Muses, Arts, &c. Everything that made Life beautiful here, we may hope may pass on with us beyond the grave.*

The description somewhat reminds one of the passage of king Arthur to the island of Avilion.

CIV.

Christmastide again; and he hears the bells from

"A single church below the hill;"

this is at the place to which the family had moved, and the church is *Waltham Abbey church.* It is a fresh and strange locality, and the bells sound like strangers' voices, recalling nothing of his previous life; no memory can stray in the surrounding scenery;

"But all is new unhallow'd ground."

The Poet's mother lived for several years

with her sister, Miss Fytche, in Well Walk, Hampstead; but this new home was at *High Beach, Epping Forest.*

CV.[a]

It is Christmas Eve, but the holly outside their new home shall stand ungathered. He deprecates repeating their old observances of this season in a new place. He thinks of his father's grave "under other snows" than those he looks on; and how the violet will blow there, "but we are gone."

What was done in the old home cannot be repeated in the new habitation,

> "For change of place, like growth of time,
> Has broke the bond of dying use."[b]

[a] "This holly by the cottage-eave,
To-night, ungather'd, shall it stand."

Changed in later editions to

"To-night ungather'd let us leave
This laurel, let this holly stand."

[b] "Use and Wont,
Old sisters of a day gone by.
They too will die."—Poem xxix.

He would have this Christmas Eve kept with reverent solemnity: no joyous forms retained from which the spirit has gone; no music, dance, or motion,

> "save alone
> What lightens in the lucid East
> Of rising worlds by yonder wood."

This *refers to the scintillation of the stars rising.* Let these run out their

> "measured arcs, and lead
> The closing cycle rich in good;"

bringing Christ's second advent.

CVI.

The old year is rung out by "wild bells to the wild sky;" and he would have these ring out all abuses and evils, and ring in all good, and the various blessings which he enumerates—

> "Ring out the thousand wars of old,
> Ring in the thousand years of peace,"

the millennium; and last of all,

"Ring in the Christ that is to be;"

God Himself again upon earth.

CVII.

"It is the day when he was born,"

the anniversary of Hallam's birth, which took place in Bedford Place, London, on 1st February, 1811.

One may suppose this Poem to have been written at night, because the description is of

"A bitter day that early sank
Behind a purple frosty bank
Of vapour, leaving night forlorn."

Indeed, the time is determined by the poetry, for "yon hard crescent" shows that the moon was up when he was writing.

Ice making "daggers at the sharpen'd eaves" is a common sight. Such icicles may be sometimes seen a yard long, pendent from any eave or ledge.

"Brakes" means *bushes;* "grides" may mean "grates;" and "iron horns" must be the dry hard forked boughs; but how distinguished from the "leafless ribs" of the wood, unless as descriptive of the forms of different trees in the wood, is difficult to understand.

> "The drifts that pass
> To darken on the rolling brine
> That breaks the coast"

must allude to drifts of snow, which falling into water, immediately blacken before they dissolve.

"Bring in great logs and let them lie."

This birthday shall no more be kept as a day of mourning, but shall be joyously observed,

> "with festal cheer,
> With books and music, surely we
> Will drink to him whate'er he be,
> And sing the songs he loved to hear."[a]

[a] "*Ligna super foco large reponens.*" Thackeray sang,

> "Care, like a dun,
> Lurks at the gate,
> Let the dog wait!
> Happy we'll be.

CVIII.

A noble resolution seems to be now formed, not to become morbid and misanthropic; he will not "stiffen into stone:"[a] and this feeling appears to sustain and animate the Poet throughout the remainder of his loving tribute.

He admits that "barren faith and vacant yearning" are profitless; although they may carry him in thought to the highest height of heaven, or to the deepest depth of Death. And this being so, his upward glance only reveals

"Mine own phantom chanting hymns;"

or, gazing below, he sees

"The reflex of a human face."

His lost friend being, therefore, every-

Drink every one.
Pile up the coals,
Fill the red bowls,
Round the old tree."

[a] "All stone I felt within," Dante's Inferno, xxxiii. 47. Wright's translation. "My heart is turned to stone," Othello, act iv., s. 1. Eloisa says, "I have not quite forgot myself to stone."

where represented, he will try to extract wisdom from the sorrow which he cannot exclude; though this be not such wisdom as sleeps with Hallam.

"'Tis held that sorrow makes us wise"

is repeated in P. cxiii., 1.

CIX.

Hallam's character and accomplishments are recited. Richness of conversation, much imported from an intellectual home; with critical powers over all poetry. Keen and rapid thought displayed in logical argument. Delighting in what is good, but not ascetic, and pure in life. Loving freedom, but without

"The blind hysterics of the Celt,"[a]

and uniting manliness with female grace, which made him such a favourite with children.

[a] Lucan has, "*ululârunt tristia Galli.*"

If the survivor, who had seen and admired all these qualities, had not allowed such wisdom to make him wise, then shame be on him!

CX.

He recalls their former Cambridge discussions; and how Hallam's powers of conversation drew out

"The men of rathe and riper years;"

both the young and older. He gave confidence to the timid, the true-hearted held to him, and the deceitful were exposed,

"While I, thy dearest,[a] sat apart"

watching these triumphs, and enjoying them as my own; and though not possessing the tact, and art, and sweetness, and skill, yet I seemed to share in them, from the love and admiration which they inspired.

[a] "Nearest" in later editions.

"And, born of love, the vague desire
That spurs an imitative will,"

rose in me, and made me wish to do likewise.

CXI.

"The churl in spirit" may be found in all ranks of society. Even the king, holding the golden ball of state, may be "at heart a clown."

The "coltish nature" will break out through all the disguises of fashion: but in Hallam

"God and nature met in light,
And thus he bore without abuse
The grand old name of gentleman,[a]
Defamed by every charlatan,
And soil'd with all ignoble use."

CXII.

"High wisdom," which judges *ex cathedrâ*, will condemn him for preferring "glorious insufficiencies" to "narrower perfectness."

[a] Sir Thomas Browne, in his "Christian Morals," says, "the true heroick English gentleman hath no peer."

He esteems high purposes after what is unattained, as exhibited in Hallam's shortened life, more than a complete fulfilment of lesser duties by the "lords of doom," who rule in our social system, and are *those that have free will, but less intellect.*

His friend was "some novel power," which

> "Sprang up for ever at a touch,
> And hope could never hope too much,
> In watching thee from hour to hour."

CXIII.

He persistently dwells on Hallam's capabilities. Sorrow may teach wisdom; but how much more sleeps with him, who would not only have guided the survivor, but served all public ends.

He thinks his friend might have become a leading statesman of the day—a pilot to weather the storm, when the greatest social agonies prevailed.

CXIV.

"Who loves not Knowledge"? He would have it pursued to its utmost limits; but in the keen searchings of the scientific there is this danger, that conclusions are apt to be accepted before they have been proved.

When "cut from love and faith," Science is no more than "some wild Pallas from the brain of Demons"—like Minerva, who sprang all armed and full-grown from the brain of Jupiter.

Science, too often,

> "leaps into the future chance,
> Submitting all things to desire.
> Half-grown as yet, a child, and vain"—

and therefore needing caution and restraint.

If separated from love and faith, she bursts

> "All barriers in her onward race
> For power."

Science is "second, not the first,"

> "For she is earthly of the mind,
> But Wisdom heavenly of the soul."

He would have the world wise and modest,

> "like thee,
> Who grewest not alone in power
> And knowledge, but by year and hour
> In reverence and in charity."

It may be remarked that, here and elsewhere, the Poet makes a distinction betwixt mind and soul: the former acquiring knowledge which

> "is of things we see;"

the latter by faith,

> "Believing where we cannot prove;"

even those things which St. Paul says "are not seen and are eternal."

CXV.

Spring is described, with its sprouting hedges and blowing violets. The whole

landscape changes in colour, with the warmer weather;

> "And drown'd in yonder living blue
> The lark becomes a sightless song."[a]

Who has not heard the lark, after it has become invisible in the heavens?

The migratory "birds that change their sky"[b] return and build their nests;

> "and my regret
> Becomes an April violet,
> And buds and blossoms like the rest."

He is cheered by the opening season.

CXVI.

Is it regret for buried time—grief for

[a] In *Measure for Measure*, act iii., s. 1, we read

> "To be imprison'd in the viewless winds."

"Sightless" and "viewless" are alike used for "invisible."

> "O, therefore, from thy sightless range."
> P. xciii., 3.

[b] "*Cælum mutant, qui trans mare currunt.*"
Hor. Ep. xi., 27.

the friend whom he has lost—which makes him feel so tender and susceptible of the influences of Spring? Not wholly so: for "life re-orient out of dust," the revival of vegetation, raises his spirits, and "heartens," strengthens his trust in that Power which made the earth beautiful.

Nor is it altogether "regret" that he feels; for the face and the voice of his friend come back; and the voice speaks of me and mine—his sister as well as himself—and he is conscious of

> "Less yearning for the friendship fled,
> Than some strong bond which is to be"—

reunion hereafter.

CXVII.

"O days and hours"—he declares their work to be the accumulation of joy they will bring to that future meeting, from which at present they are detaining him.

"Delight a hundredfold" will accrue from this postponement—the contribution of every grain of sand through the hour-glass, of "every span of shade" across the sundial, of every click in the watch, and each day's sun.

CXVIII.

A friend observes that this Poem is a remarkable exposition of the nebular hypothesis, as sanctioned by geologists.

Look at "this work of Time," its slow growth and effect; and don't believe that "human love and truth" dissolve and pass away, as being no more than "dying Nature's earth and lime," insensible and finite.

Rather trust that

> "the dead
> Are breathers of an ampler day
> For ever nobler ends."

If this solid earth came from elements dissolved by "fluent heat," and man was the last result; then he, who is now enduring fears and sorrows and the battering "shocks of doom," typifies "this work of time" on natural objects; for he must be, as they have been, in process of being moulded for a higher state. He is moving upward, "working out the beast," and letting "the ape and tiger die," while in his present probationary condition.

CXIX.

The work of resignation in the mourner's heart is here acknowledged. In Poem vii. he represents himself as standing, "like a guilty thing," at the door of the London house where they used to meet, and he was then all sad and comfortless.

But now he revisits the spot, at the same early hour, and his feelings have changed and have become reconciled and

hopeful. He smells "the meadow in the street," the waggon loads of hay and clover coming in from the country.

Wimpole Street is here again described, with morning breaking over the house-tops:

> "I see
> Betwixt the black fronts long-withdrawn
> A light blue lane of early dawn."

It was at No. 67 in this street that Mr. Hallam lived, and wrote his great historical works; and his son Arthur used to say, "We are always to be found at sixes and sevens."

All is now welcome:

> "I think of early days and thee,
> And bless thee, for thy lips are bland,
> And bright the friendship of thine eye;
> And in my thoughts with scarce a sigh
> I take the pressure of thine hand."

CXX.

He exults in the victory of a higher faith. We are not "magnetic mockeries"

—simply material "brain"—"casts in clay"—to perish as soon as the galvanic battery ceases to act,

> "not in vain,
> Like Paul with beasts, I fought with Death."

Let Science prove the contrary, even that we only exist for this life, and I won't stay here. And Science herself would then be valueless, since she had only taught us our nothingness.

Let "the wiser man" of the future

> "up from childhood shape
> His action like the greater ape,
> But I was born to other things."

This is spoken ironically, and is a strong protest against materialism, but *not against evolution.*[a] Nevertheless, the gorilla is not our grandfather!

[a] The work begun by Nature is finished by the Supernatural—as we are wont to call the higher natural. And as the veil is lifted by Christianity, it strikes men dumb with wonder. For the goal of Evolution is Jesus Christ. The Christian life is the only life that will ever be completed. Apart from Christ, the life of man is a broken pillar, the race of men an unfinished pyramid."—Drummond's *Natural Law in the Spiritual World*, p. 314.

CXXI.

"Sad Hesper," the evening star, only rises to "follow the buried sun;" but, in the "dim and dimmer" light of late afternoon, it watches the conclusion of man's daily labours. The teams are loosened from the waggons, "the boat is drawn upon the shore," the house door is closed, "and life is darken'd in the brain" of the sleeper.

Phosphor, the morning star, sees the renewal of life; the bird with its early song, the rising sun, the market boat again floating and voices calling to it from the shore, the village blacksmith with his clinking hammer, and the team again harnessed and at work.

Hesper and Phosphor are simply the one planet Venus, which according to its position with the sun, becomes the morning or evening star.

So the Poet sings,

"Sweet Hesper-Phosphor, double name
For what is one, the first, the last,
Thou, like my present and my past,
Thy place is changed; thou art the same."

Hallam has only been removed: he is not altered into something else—"not lost, but gone before." No—*the writer is rather referring to himself:* and as his own "present" and "past" are so different; the latter, with a bright prospect, may be likened to the morning star, Phosphor; whilst the former, full of gloom and sorrow, is represented by Hesper, the star of evening, and precursor of black night.

CXXII.

He seems to recall some former occasion, when in wild enquiry he had dared to question the great secrets of life and death —now and hereafter.

This may not refer to any special time, but to the general uneasiness of his feel-

ings before submission had been attained ;[a] and he now says,

> "If thou wert with me, and the grave
> Divide us not, be with me now."

Let me again, "like an inconsiderate boy," "slip the thoughts of life and death," give free rein to a speculative imagination; for now, in a higher and better frame of mind, it will be that "every thought breaks out a rose"—a blossom of truth.

CXXIII.

The great changes on the earth's surface are bewildering, and hint that "nothing stands" and endures.

Where the tree now grows, and the long street is full of crowd and noise, there was once

> "The stillness of the central sea."

[a] See Poem xcvi.

The very hills and solid lands are no more than shadows, or

"Like clouds that shape themselves and go."

But our parting is not for ever,

"For tho' my lips may breathe adieu,
I cannot think the thing farewell."[a]

I am sure that we shall meet again.

CXXIV.

In this Poem we have a profound acknowledgment of the revealed Godhead in its triune manifestations, though not expressed in ecclesiastical formula:

"Our dearest faith; our ghastliest doubt;
He, They, One, All; within, without;
The Power in darkness whom we guess."

This Power lives in our hearts. Eye hath not seen Him, nor is He to be found "in world or sun," or by dissection of what has lived, or by process of reasoning.

[a] What is the difference of meaning in the two words "adieu" and "farewell"? Byron says in *Lara*,

"Farewell to life, but not adieu to thee."

If ever his own faith faltered, and a voice said, "believe no more," the reproving witness was within himself.

> "A warmth within the breast would melt
> The freezing reason's colder part,
> And like a man in wrath the heart
> Stood up and answer'd, I have felt."[a]

Still he was

> "as a child that cries,
> But, crying, knows his father near."[b]

His own heart, which is the home of faith, testified to Divine truth, which "no man understands," but he accepts it as the one solution of what exists.

CXXV.

He admits that some "bitter notes"

[a] "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Romans x., 10

[b] "But as I rav'd, and grew more fierce and wild
At every word,
Methought I heard one calling, *Child*,
And I reply'd, *My Lord*."
The Collar, G. Herbert.

have sounded from his harp. But though his tongue may at times have seemed to speak with contradiction, Hope was nevertheless still alive to better things.

And if Love "play'd with gracious lies," suggested difficulties, this Love had only dared to do so

"Because he felt so fixed in truth."

Love sustained him when his song was "full of care;" and Love's signet marked it whenever it was "sweet and strong;" and he implores Love to abide with him till he joins his friend "on the mystic deeps," when his own electric brain no longer "keeps a thousand pulses dancing."

CXXVI.

Here is a noble testimony to the comfort and assurance which Love, when made our "Lord and King," can impart.

In the Poet's estimation, Love is the Charity of St. Paul; believing, hoping,

enduring, and never failing. Love brings us tidings of the dead. Love guards us in life, even in sleep. Through his influence we hear, as from a sentinel,

> "Who moves about from place to place,
> And whispers to the worlds of space,
> In the deep night, that all is well."

CXXVII.

Yes, "all is well, tho' faith and form be sunder'd" in temporary crises; that is, one must believe in ultimate good, even when the immediate circumstances are most adverse. The storm will rage below on earth, before truth and justice can be firmly established.

> "The red fool-fury of the Seine"

does not specially refer to the Revolution of 1848, as it was *probably written long before* '48.

Such convulsions will cease at last; there is calm beyond; and, even whilst they last,

"thou, dear spirit, happy star,
O'erlook'st the tumult from afar,
And smilest, knowing all is well."

CXXVIII.

The Love, which became stronger in himself, after encountering Death at the departure of Hallam,

"Is comrade to the lesser faith
That sees the course of human things."

This "lesser faith" attends to the events of time, and is not overborne by present confusions, but reaches, sustained by Love, to a last happy consummation.

If all that the "wild Hours" of Time had to do was to repeat the past, bring about useless wars, "fool the crowd with glorious lies," cleave religion into sects, disguise language, change governments, cramp learning, patch afresh what is antique and worn—if these results were all that could be effected, then would my scorn be well deserved. But

"I see in part
That all, as in some piece of art,
Is toil co-operant to an end;"

that all things are working together for final good.

CXXIX.

A more touching and tender address to the dead was never uttered than this Poem expresses, a more pure and ennobling affection was never described. Sorrow is lost in the more exalted sentiment of their certain reunion, and in the strength derived from a consciousness of the worthiness of their past friendship.

"Strange friend, past, present, and to be,
Loved deeplier, darklier understood;
Behold, I dream a dream of good,
And mingle all the world with thee."

CXXX.

Each had so participated in the other's

life: they had looked on Nature with such kindred eyes, having one mind and taste; that the survivor both sees and hears his former companion in all objects and sounds which present themselves.

Everything reminds him of Hallam; but

> "Tho' mix'd with God and Nature thou,
> I seem to love thee more and more."

His last declaration of devoted attachment is,

> "Far off thou art, but ever nigh;
> I have thee still, and I rejoice;
> I prosper, circled with thy voice;
> I shall not lose thee tho' I die."

CXXXI.

"O living will"—*free will in man*—that will outlast all present things, surviving and enduring

> "When all that seems shall suffer shock,
> Rise in the spiritual rock,"

which is Christ, the source of all life and strength; and flowing through our deeds, "make them pure;" so that out of the dust of death, we may cry to One that hears, and has conquered time, and with us works; and we may put our whole trust in those "truths that never can be proved until we close with all we loved," and with God Himself, who will be "all in all"—not by the souls of mankind becoming absorbed into the "general Soul"—a notion which Poem xlvii. repudiates—but by the Divine nature being infused into and prevailing in all.

PREFATORY POEM.

To this final confession of faith, worked out through Sorrow by the sustaining help of Love, the prefatory Poem is merely a pendant.

"Strong Son of God, immortal Love,"

is addressed to Christ, God Himself upon earth.[a] George Herbert had before called our Saviour

"Immortal Love, author of this great frame;"

and our Poet says, though we have not seen His face, we embrace Him by faith,

"Believing where we cannot prove."

He acknowledges Him as the great Creator, and through all surrounding mysteries and disappointments, is satisfied with this conclusion as to the future,

"Thou art just."

This conviction is enough.

"Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, thou"—

[a] Many years ago, I had a conversation with the Poet in his attic study at Farringford, that lasted till nearly daybreak. He discoursed on many subjects, and when we touched on religion, he said, *I am not very fond of creeds: it is enough for me that I know God Himself came down from heaven in the form of man.* I cannot resist testifying to the singular frankness and impressiveness of his conversation, especially when talking to my wife, who approached much nearer to his intellectual level than I did, and whom he has now joined "on the mystic deeps."—A. G.

God incarnate, to whom we must become spiritually united,

> "Our wills are ours, to make them thine,"

as expressed in Poem cxxxi., stanza 1.

"Our little systems" "are but broken lights of thee," even as the colours of the rainbow are the broken lights of the sun.

> "We have but faith: we cannot know;
> For knowledge is of things we see."

Faith apprehends things which are spiritual, and do not come within the range of our senses; whilst knowledge accepts only what can be seen and understood.

Hence, the Poet would have knowledge advance and increase to the utmost, "a beam in darkness" ever growing. But reverence must grow with it; so that mind which accumulates knowledge, and soul which is the dwelling-place of faith, according well with each other, may make one music—be in harmony "as before,"

that is, I presume, as at first; but now "vaster" in their compass owing to the greater reach of modern thought and research.

This warning against scientific assumptions, in opposition to spiritual truths, is repeated from Poem cxiv.

The concluding humble prayer, contained in the three last stanzas, has the true ring of devout piety.

> "Forgive what seem'd my sin in me;
> What seem'd my worth since I began;
> For merit lives from man to man,
> And not from man, O Lord, to thee.
>
> "Forgive my grief for one removed,
> Thy creature, whom I found so fair.
> I trust he lives in thee, and there
> I find him worthier to be loved.
>
> "Forgive these wild and wandering cries,
> Confusions of a wasted youth;
> Forgive them where they fail in truth,
> And in thy wisdom make me wise."

"What seem'd my sin," would be the

Poet's excessive grief for Hallam's death: for he elsewhere says,

> "I count it crime
> To mourn for any overmuch."[a]

"What seem'd my worth," would be his devoted love for his friend, which he felt had ennobled his own life; and so he says,

> "To breathe my loss is more than fame,
> To utter love more sweet than praise."

But this worth was only comparative,

> "from man to man,
> And not from man, O Lord, to thee;

since no human goodness can be counted as merit in the sight of God.

SUPPLEMENTARY POEM.

The Epithalamium, or marriage lay, which is added to the great Poem, refers

[a] Shakespeare says,

"Moderate lamentation is the right of the dead,
Excessive grief the enemy to the living."

All's well that ends well, act i., s. 1.

to the wedding of a younger sister, Cecilia Tennyson, who, about the year 1842, married Edmund Law Lushington, sometime Professor of Greek at the University of Glasgow.

The strong domestic affections of the Poet are prominently shown throughout *In Memoriam*, and his pleasure at this bridal is very charming. He just recalls that Hallam had appreciated the Bride in her childhood:

> "O when her life was yet in bud,
> He too foretold the perfect rose."

The worth of the Bridegroom is acknowledged in this address:

> "And thou art worthy; full of power;
> As gentle; liberal-minded, great,
> Consistent; wearing all that weight
> Of learning[a] lightly like a flower."

The whole Poem is pleasant and jocund

[a] The late Sub-Dean Garden said, that E. L. Lushington was the most learned man in England, after Bishop Thirlwall. Professor Lushington died 13th July, 1893.

and *was meant to be a kind of Divina Commedia — ending cheerfully* — but it scarcely harmonizes with the lofty solemnity of *In Memoriam*, whose Author might rejoice in the thought, that he would leave behind him a rich legacy of comfort to all future generations of mourners.

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